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The life and times of John  
Calvin











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THE  
LIFE AND TIMES  
OF  
JOHN CALVIN,

THE GREAT REFORMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF  
PAUL HENRY, D.D.,  
MINISTER AND SEMINARY-INSPECTOR IN BERLIN.

BY  
HENRY STEBBING, D.D., F.R.S.

AUTHOR OF "HISTORY OF THE CHURCH AND REFORMATION" IN LARDNER'S CYCLOPEDIA;  
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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

NEW YORK:  
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No. 285 BROADWAY.

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1851.

TO

DOCTOR NEANDER,

THE FAITHFUL, PROFOUND, AND ENLIGHTENED

HISTORIAN OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST,

THE TRANSLATOR,

FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF THE

DISTINGUISHED AUTHIOR OF THIS WORK,

DEDICATES IT,

IN ITS ENGLISH FORM,

WITH THE MOST EARNEST SENTIMENTS OF RESPECT

AND ADMIRATION.



## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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THE Author has fully explained in his preface the object which he proposed to himself in undertaking a life of Calvin. It will be sufficient, therefore, for the Translator to state the reasons which induce him to hope that the work may be acceptable to English readers. In the inquiries which he was led to make, some few years ago, into the history of the Reformation, he felt both surprise and regret that so little exact information existed respecting Calvin. Independent of his fame as a theologian, Calvin is one of the great historical characters of the sixteenth century. We can form, indeed, no adequate idea of that period if we leave out of our consideration the labors and actions of a man, who so materially aided the development of the all-important principles then in progress of formation. The present work affords ample details on the main points connected with Calvin's history, and with that of his age. They have been derived from sources now, in great part, for the first time made public. The Translator, therefore, hopes that he has not been unprofitably employed in giving this biography to the English reader.

Dr. Henry's admiration of Calvin is almost unbounded. But devoted as is his veneration for the great reformer, he has been too candid to conceal either his faults or his errors. Though generally taking the part of an apologist, he never omits facts or documents; never garbles

a letter, or weakens, by an imperfect abstract, a hostile argument.

Twenty years, we understand, intervened between the commencement and the completion of this work. No slight variety of style has been the consequence. The Author generally writes with much vigor, and is often eloquent; but his style is occasionally painfully harsh, abrupt, and perplexed. Hence the Translator has had to choose between the attempt to soften the original, at the hazard of somewhat modifying the meaning of the Author, or following the current of his style, rough as it may be, and thus leaving the matter to be settled between the reader and the original writer.

But anxious as he has been honestly to preserve the sharpest features of the original, the Translator may be permitted, he trusts, to guard himself against the chance of misrepresentation as to his own views or opinions. He begs then that it may be understood, that it is chiefly on account of its historical value that he has desired to make this work known to English readers. He has a most sincere respect for the piety and eminent talents of the author; but neither his regard for Dr. Henry, nor his profound admiration of Calvin, in the general features of his character and sublime zeal, has altered his views on the subject to which he has here more especial cause to refer. Dr. Henry has defended Calvin, in the case of Servetus, with admirable ability; but the Translator believes still, as he has ever believed, that when men enjoy so large a measure of light and wisdom as Calvin possessed, they cannot be justified, if guilty of persecution, because they lived in times when wicked and vulgar minds warred against the rights of human conscience. If Calvin had prayed to be set free from the bondage which made him a persecutor,

his otherwise spotless reputation would have been unstained by the one blot which disfigures it. Persecution is opposed to the essential principles of Christianity. Nothing can justify it, under any form or pretence whatsoever, as long as the Gospel is acknowledged to be divine.

With regard again to matters connected with church government and discipline, the Translator desires to state, that, while reporting the sentiments of many parties on these subjects, he has learnt to love, more and more, the church to which it is his happiness and privilege to belong. Much as he desires to see some improvements in the practical working of its system, and truly as he deplores the abuses which prevail in ecclesiastical patronage, he is fully persuaded that no church has ever more closely approached the apostolic model, or been more generally adapted to imbue a nation with the knowledge and the principles of the Gospel, than the Church of England.

London.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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It is especially useful, for the period at which we are arrived, to hold communion with the great men of former times—with those noble characters whose fortitude may teach us to think more profoundly and to act more firmly ; to examine with keener observation the plan of divine providence, and thus render our times preparative of a better future. While Luther's history is more adapted to awaken Christian sentiments among the people at large, that of Calvin is eminently calculated to exercise a powerful influence on the minds of the thoughtful and educated. Not so suited as the former to arouse religious feeling, it is much better fitted to sharpen the spirit, to excite a love of great undertakings in modern times, and to ground them firmly on the rock of faith, that is, Jesus Christ.

After three centuries, there are many, at the present day, in whom the memory of the old times, and the desire of church-reform, is powerfully awakened. From the northern provinces of the German race to the banks of the Rhine and the Seine ; from the Wartburg to the lake of Geneva and the Alpine valleys, where Zwingli was born ; nay, throughout England to the Highlands of Scotland, and even to the most distant parts of the world, has a fresh enthusiasm been aroused for that which was noble in the past, and for a still nobler future. And this enthusiasm



will doubtless at length triumph over the disbelief and the vain spirit of political rancor, which can never give either contentment to the world, or peace to the human heart.

It has been rightly observed, that we are arrived at the point of time when a new epoch is about to commence; and in such epochs of the life of the church will the voices of the great spirits, which God raised up in early times, call to us from afar, and awaken us from our slumbers. When the Spirit of God moves and the heart feels his approach, then will the spirits of men again understand their calling, and Calvin will speak, and find the way to our hearts.

Two churches lie before us in their ruins; but a new life is seen amid those ruins; and it is our business to consider carefully how the spirit of that life can be supported. The twofold manifestation of the church of Christ must be proved in the balance of Christian principle; and, in this respect, it is useful to examine strictly the proceedings of such combatants as Calvin, that we may determine what was well and what was ill done in their course. Calvin's life exhibits the errors of the Roman Catholic church in the clearest light. We there also see Protestant antagonism, with its attendant defects; but, at the same time, the pure Christian faith in all its genuine strength; that faith which must, sooner or later, overcome all the opposition and errors of the age, and raise the Evangelical church from its ruins, to assume a new and purer form. Calvin's experiment to found an apostolic edifice affords excellent materials in aid of this object.

The value of an acquaintance with this great man is especially apparent at a period, when so many efforts have been made to prove that the Protestant church cannot last; that it bears within itself the elements of decay; and when

we are unceasingly told, that no other choice remains for us but that between anarchy or an unchristian rationalism, and a blind subjection to the power of the Catholic church. But Evangelical Christendom knows a middle way between these hostile extremes, one which is according to the type of the primitive apostolic church. It is this which Calvin exhibited in his doctrine, and in his admirable plans of discipline and synodal government; so that, freed from the individual peculiarities with which, in his own times, his system could not fail to be marked, it will now afford to an inquiring age a safe pathway through its difficulties. He proved, from first to last, that the principle of Protestantism does not consist in a free, lawless inquiry of the understanding, which necessarily leads to anarchy and ruin; but in a devout employment of the mind and conscience, as enlightened and governed by the Holy Spirit. Hence, amid all the varieties of individual feeling, a great and eternal harmony exists in the main doctrines of the Evangelical church, and this harmony is the bond of union among its members.

The value of a close acquaintance with Calvin appears also in another respect. The church of Geneva celebrated in 1835 a three-days' festival in honor of its first reformation-epoch. In this festival even the Roman Catholic clergy, who were disposed to cherish evangelical feelings, took a part. They acknowledged the benefit which their own church gained through the Reformation. Viewing its errors on the one side, and the old evangelical truth of the apostolic church on the other, they saw how it might be purified from the corruptions which were mingled with the Catholic faith, and they were not unwilling to extend to us the hand of brotherhood. But while this was the case even with Catholics, how strongly were the members of the

Reformed and Lutheran churches admonished of their duty to form a closer union; to confess the pure apostolic faith in the Son of God; and to abolish the distinction of names, the same Spirit of the Gospel being common to both, and the churches of Northern Germany having already set the example in this Christian course! A nearer acquaintance with Calvin, far from being an obstacle to such a union, must tend greatly to promote it. He deeply lamented every appearance of schism, and he strove with the most sincere desire to unite the opposite parties in the Evangelical church into one body. Thus he amply supplies us with weapons, not only against the attacks of the Catholic party, but against the distractions of a fierce and unchristian Protestantism.

The genius and solid merits of this reformer have rarely been estimated according to their value. It is only of late years that attention has been drawn to his talent as a commentator. We may also mention it as a singular fact, that while the world is so ready to censure the ignorance of former times, it should still have so generally retained its prejudice against Calvin. While this is shown by particular criticisms directed against him, it is equally evident from the circumstance that not a single complete biography of this remarkable man has appeared, many as have been the memoirs written of the other less important actors in the time of the Reformation. The life of Calvin by the Genevese, Senebier, and translated into German by Ziegenbein, and that by Tischer, are simple biographical notices, and contain even less than that by Beza, which is itself but a mere outline. Bretschneider's excellent and solid, though short memoir, in the "Reformations-Almanach," on the genius and character of Calvin, combines a knowledge of the man with that of his history. The earlier

works written about him are either filled with abuse, or are mere panegyrics. It was impossible, perhaps, that Calvin should have been regarded at a former period in a historical point of view. As a polemic, he could only be treated with a one-sided prejudice. Assailed with passionate violence by his opponents, a sort of church-patriotism taught his friends to represent him as infallible and immaculate. Thus he shared the fate of many other great men, namely, to be fanatically hated, or loved extravagantly. But during the reign of apostasy and indifference he was forgotten or despised. Now, however, when it has ceased to be the fashion to magnify, in a spirit of controversy, the failings of the great teachers of the church, or to lessen and conceal them; and when it is seen that evangelical churches rest upon a very different foundation to that laid by the mere virtues of the reformers, it becomes possible to form an unprejudiced opinion of this man, and to expect it from all religious parties, even from evangelically-minded Roman Catholics. We may now also look for justice to be done to the greatness of his genius.

The old prejudice against him has even prevailed in reformed France, and such has been the indifference respecting him, that till now, amid all the variety of books, good and bad, proceeding from the press, no one has thought of writing the history of this great theologian. It has been no better in Switzerland. In England only has some love for the forgotten Calvin been displayed.

It is the hope, therefore, of the author of this work, that it may serve to awaken attention, not only to the genius of Calvin, but to the man himself, whom the world has so long misrepresented, and that it may be regarded as exhibiting him in his proper character, without any attempt to adorn it, but with the same conscientious regard to truth



which he himself would have displayed had he written his own life. Germany is familiar with the "Institutes," and a great part of his "Commentaries" may be found in every one's hands. But the present work will make him, we trust, more generally known. He has hitherto been inaccessible to the ordinary class of readers; no extracts or selections from his numerous writings have been published, as in the case of Luther. I have, therefore, selected several interesting passages from his theological works, and have given his letters, partly in a literal translation and partly in extracts. In these there lies hidden, in its elements, the power of faith and of a profound intellectuality. They are impressed with the most amiable features of his character, hitherto almost entirely overlooked.

But there is a moral benefit to be expected from an increasing acquaintance with Calvin: his practical life cannot fail to be useful, as an effectual argument against those who adopt and laud the doctrine of election, because it serves them as a cloak for their sins. And further, the contemplation of a clear and well-defined Christian character like his must needs be profitable at a time when egotism and sensuality so universally prevails. That stern and especially resolute spirit, which, without a trace of selfishness, had so readily sacrificed all; that severe purity and morality, form a singular contrast to the corrupt spirit of the times.

May the world then, perverted as it has been by French example, listen to the fact, that at no remote period there existed in France a moral tribunal; that a sublime experiment was made there to preserve the Christian church, by a moral power and strength, pure from the contagion of a miserable heathenism; that the unworthy were excommunicated; whilst the church offered up its supplications for those who were thus separated from its communion;—all



which may sound as a wonder in the ears of the present sensual age. Here too we might speak of the martyrs of that country, who afforded examples of fortitude not excelled in the primitive church. France will never, we believe, arrive at a proper knowledge of herself till she learn to know and to love the great reformer sent her by God. He was given to her as a bitter medicine, but she must take it. The stone which the builders rejected is become a corner-stone. He may be one of stumbling to many, but he will be also for the rising of many. In a word, Calvin is as a source of living faith, hitherto despised, but to which we now direct attention: he is also as an armory, whence weapons may be drawn for every Christian in his good fight against all the powers of Antichrist.

May the churches in Germany and France look to such champions, now that a new life is awakening among them! It is right that at such a period the heroes of our faith should be brought before us. Saint Bernard portrayed by Neander; Wessel by Ullman; Luther in the History of the Reformation by Marheineke; Beza and Martyr by Schlosser; Zwingli by Hess; Spener by Hossbach; Bengel by Burck; and many others, in whom the Spirit of God dwelt, were impelled to seek and to plan what was great not by flesh and blood; and if they erred, they erred nobly. May Germany, mindful of its high calling, again attempt something great for the world! May France awake from its vain dreams, and behold its martyrs, so unknown to the world, but so great before God, and who now look down with sorrow upon the desolate scenes amid which they so bravely fought and conquered!

Both these countries, so altogether different from each other in modes of thinking, in manners and literature, may become united as Christian churches, and render this union superior to all other relations. Germany may help France,

because by a long and earnest theological culture it possesses a Christian vitality ; and France may help Germany by the history of its church, in which the blood of the saints was poured out as in no other church. Thus Calvin has a right to be heard in Germany. Much will be found related of him in this work, but it is mainly intended to induce the reader to study Calvin himself, and to desire the strong food which he offers. We are not likely however to yield ourselves to the influence of this great man, unless we be first made acquainted with the task imposed upon him by God, and with the force by which he overcame its difficulties. We must live and pray with him, and see how his strength armed itself more and more for the conflict, and how the Holy Spirit led, supported and comforted him throughout his life. The only thing to be advanced against him is, that he was not in every respect superior to his age ; and that, like all other men, he had to strive with human infirmities. And if Providence should grant the church another such teacher, how would he in the present day, and after an experience of three hundred years, speak to us in the new circumstances of the world ? What judgment would he pass upon our creed, upon our systems of doctrine, and dogmatics ? How would he assail the infidel ? How would he endeavor to reimpart holiness to the church of Christ ? What methods would he employ to secure the church in its rightful position against Catholic despotism and Protestant anarchy ? To establish its proper relation to the State ? To restore and preserve its unity ?

These are questions which every attentive reader of the life of Calvin must endeavor to answer ; they correspond to those which he himself strove with untiring zeal and with the whole energy of his spirit to solve, and which he answered according to the gifts afforded him.

And now may the Lord bless this work ! I have finished

it with a deep feeling of my own insufficiency for the task, and amid numerous professional occupations; nor would it have ever seen the light had I not felt an inward call, which made the undertaking a matter of duty.

Dr. Henry gives a detailed account of the sources of his information. The substance of this statement will be found in the notes and references. No author perhaps could ever lay claim to greater industry or honesty in the examination of original authorities than Dr. Henry. Proceeding in the next place to describe the plan of his work, he says:—

I could not conceal from myself, that the execution of a work like the life of Calvin must be attended with many difficulties. The first point to be determined was, in what spirit it should be treated, and in how far that spirit must differ in its working from that of the present day. Another difficulty belonging to the undertaking arose from the great abundance of the materials. Whatever Calvin did, formed a link in the chain of the events to be related, and the biographer was obliged to follow him through a course of labors greatly varied in its direction. Every word which he uttered had its importance, and none of his works could properly be passed over without notice. It was also necessary to make some mention of the circumstances of the times. Neither the greatness nor the failings of Calvin could be understood, if viewed apart. The events of the period when he lived influenced the man, as he influenced them. The history of the French reformation moreover is much less known than that of the German. Our volatile, but still rightly-disposed age, loves what is piquant and individual in biography; requires completeness, but at the same time a careful sifting of materials, and abhors a ponderous superfluity.

A methodical plan, according to which the first part should have been confined to a record of events, or to the life and letters of Calvin, the second to an account of his doctrine, and the third to that of his government of the church, might indeed have reduced the abundance of the materials to order; but I have been obliged to reject the idea of such a plan, because by such a separation of the matter, what the work would have gained in form, it would have lost in its fitness to represent the character of the man, and in its influence on the reader. The life itself would have had a cold and skeleton-like appearance, altogether wanting in force; while the other two parts would have failed in interest when separated from what excites our sympathy with the person. A right feeling teaches us, that a biography should be thoroughly impressed with an individual character from beginning to end, and the greatest of the phenomena which it may present, whether they appear in works, systems, opinions or actions, must be connected with the minutest circumstances in the life of the man.

Next to this individual character, as essential to the biography, we must endeavor to exhibit prominently the principle,—the fundamental idea,—which animates the narrative; which gives a unity to its several parts, and thus serves to exhibit the man in his true image. If the life of an individual be written either in the whole or in part differently, the biographer constitutes himself his judge; while on the other hand he may properly use what is noble and worthy in the character described, to influence the temper of his age. Where this principle fails, the work can only prove a dull and heavy chronicle, and the reader will soon be wearied with the detail of facts, the internal connection of which is not perceptible. The narrative of mere outward events can never give the wished-for harmony to bio-



graphical materials. Were this not the case, the present biography might have been divided into two distinct parts or fragments. Thus in the first we might have shown Calvin engaged in the founding of his church, and struggling with the papacy; and in the second, the progress of his conflict with the Catholic church, and his resistance to the Protestant false teachers, whose errors disturbed him in the early part of his career, but to a much less degree. This is the division adopted by Planck in his '*Geschichte des Protestantischen Lehrbegriffs*.' But such a plan, in the present instance, would have exhibited neither the individuality of the man, nor the power of the spirit by which he was animated.

I have adopted therefore another division, as more correct and impressive, and as more intimately harmonizing with the course of the reformer's life. Three main acts are clearly discernible in his career; three fundamental ideas, or conflicts, which the Spirit of God made it his duty to pursue; and which were so closely connected, that the one could not but follow as a consequence of the other.

1. In the first part of his life he won the victory for his faith, which ever remained the same, but is seen at its highest culminating point in the second edition of the '*Institutes*.'

2. This firm faith taught him to endeavor to frame such a government and form of discipline for the church, as might secure its life, its holy evangelical life, and plant it permanently in the community. Hence his Presbyterian form of church rule, and the system of discipline which reached its height in the institution of a moral tribunal, and in the practice of excommunication.

3. But to secure perpetuity for its faith and discipline, the unity of the church itself, and the objects of the Reformation, must be protected. Hence the severe conflict

which Calvin carried on against such false teachers as Castellio, Westphal, and others. This conflict reached its height in the proceedings against Servetus. The fundamental idea of the unity of the church wrought upon him to the last moment of his life, and he commended it to his brethren with his dying breath.

Thus there were three several objects for which Calvin severally strove in the three different periods of his life. They all indeed engaged his attention, more or less, from first to last; he was anxious, for example, at the very beginning of his course, for the unity of the church. But the three propositions which he solved, or the three conflicts in which he was mainly concerned, may be regarded as so many centres around which all the various circumstances of his life may be conveniently grouped.

In the preface to the second volume of his work, Dr.

Henry expresses his satisfaction that the prejudice against Calvin is evidently declining. The venerable Dr. M'Crie was engaged at the time of his death on a Life of the reformer; and Mignet, the author of the History of the French Revolution, has written a work on Calvin and the Reformation.

It is gratifying to behold even the darker side of his character, and to study him, as he would Luther, not in the ideal, but as he actually was. It is cause for rejoicing indeed that the Lutheran church itself, which formerly entertained such enmity to Calvin, now honors him as a brother and ally, and at the late great Reformation-festival in Denmark, expressed itself as freely acknowledging a unity of spirit in both Confessions. Convinced of this unity, I have treated Calvin as a necessary central point in the development of the Reformation.

Just six years were allowed to pass after the publication

of the second volume of this work, before the third appeared. This period was employed by the author in the collection and careful examination of materials for the concluding portion of the reformer's history.

Dr. Henry, in his third preface, speaks as follows:—

It is interesting to observe the form which the Antichristian tendencies of Calvin's age assumed, and to compare it with that in which they at present appear. The aspect of things becomes every year more threatening. This is the case in respect both to the pretensions of the papal church, and the old superstition which we see reviving with unexpected and artful power; and no less so in regard to the extravagant admiration of intellectual ability, which is ready to deny the living God that it may deify itself. The elements of infidelity are all in operation; but the true and heroic faith of the Reformers will furnish weapons for him who keeps the field to the last. As the middle ages terminated with the Reformation, and decided a great question, so will the approaching age determine which shall rule, the old lie with its deceits and intrigues, or the truth which shall make us free. The Reformation began a work which must be completed. The old cobweb of Jesuitism, which has been again cast over us, must be torn asunder. The Evangelical church must reach its lofty, apostolic aim. Even the Catholic church, as before intimated, has not been wholly unbenefited by the Reformation; and we extend the hand of brotherhood to many in that sister-community, who unwillingly foster error, because they sympathize with us in the desire for evangelical truth. We know that they believe in the same Lord; and those only ought to be regarded as adversaries who desire not the truth, but continue, though among us, in the circle of Antichristian unbelief. It is against these, and not the former, that we

direct our attack. The papal church, as such, with its pretensions to the lordship of the world, and the unrighteous means which it employs to accomplish its purpose, is preparing destruction for itself. The higher its claims, the more sudden and certain will be its fall; because it thus stands opposed in its hostile inflexibility to the entire, open, free, and Christian culture of the world. And thus will it be also with the hollow unbelief which prevails among us; for what, ultimately, can Antichristianity in its falsehood do, but prepare a triumph for the truth? But victory must be preceded by a conflict; and hence it seemed to me, that at a period like the present it might be useful to exhibit, supported by proper documents, the life of a man who proved himself so strong an enemy, not to the Christian Catholic church in itself, but to the corrupt spirit which holds the papal church in bonds, and, at the same time, to the licentious demon of pantheism.

The concluding portion of this work will, I trust, tend to remove the false impressions which exist respecting Calvin's zeal for the doctrine of predestination, and his conduct in regard to Servetus. Generally speaking, candid, enlightened minds judge him correctly: the bigoted and uninstructed retain their prejudices against him, and speak of his cruelty and narrow-heartedness; probably because they have never been able to place themselves in his times and circumstances.

It is only after a considerable period that I have been able to bring this work to a conclusion. This will account for its wanting that symmetry of parts, which I would fain have given it, but found it impossible, as fresh materials flowed in upon me.



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PART I.



# LIFE AND TIMES OF CALVIN.



## CHAPTER I. A.D. 1509—1531.

STATE OF THE CHURCH AT CALVIN'S FIRST APPEARANCE.—  
PROGRESS OF RELIGIOUS OPINION IN ENGLAND.—ITALY.—  
GERMANY.

THERE is reason to believe that Calvin began to exercise some degree of influence about the year 1530. He was born in 1509. Luther, then twenty-five years old, was appointed just a year before this to the professorship at Wittenberg. When the Reformation commenced in 1517, Calvin was a boy of eight years, and he had reached his tenth year when Charles of Spain was elected emperor of Germany.

The state of the church in that country under the papacy is thus strikingly described in the sermons of the pious master Mathesius: "I can well remember that through the whole of my youth,—for till my twenty-fifth year I was in bondage to popery,—I heard nothing in the pulpit of the ten commandments, the Lord's prayer, or baptism. Of the absolution, or consolation which one enjoys through the body and blood of Christ, I never, to the best of my knowledge, heard one word mentioned till I came to Wittenberg. I cannot remember to have met with any printed or written exposition of the cate-

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chism among the papists; but I read in my youth, by the year together, all sorts of legends and trifling books of devotion.”\*

In Italy, Germany was regarded before the Reformation with utter contempt, and it was said of that country, as of Nazareth by the Jews, “Can any good thing come out of it?” Thus the pure spirit of life had time to work its way. A deep religious feeling possessed the German people. Six princes protested against the decree at Speyer, which prohibited their embracing the evangelical doctrine; and by the year 1530, the reformers had solemnly expounded their system of belief before the diet at Augsburg. This movement may be regarded as a turning-point in the history of the kingdom of God. That which had been hid in darkness for centuries was then brought into the open light of day. It is well known how Luther’s soul was agitated at this time: daily did he struggle, hour after hour, in prayer. That the emperor himself was deeply impressed with the importance of these circumstances, we learn from the account given by Matthesius. Having received a present from the chapter at Augsburg, he thus expresses himself: “You should pray for me to the Almighty as for a poor sinner, that he may give me his holy spirit to instruct me as to what it may be possible for me to do in this affair.”†

It may be easily conceived how the intelligence, which, spreading from Germany, now resounded in other lands, and the heroic movement of the Germans themselves, were likely to produce a general excitement. Calvin was then a young man of twenty-one years, but possessing an early-matured and awakened mind. The first victory was won: the combatants were weary: a new champion was needed.

Such a turning-point in history should be minutely observed. So also should the fulness of those circumstances of every kind which are brought about by Providence, the lever which must set them in motion, in order to subdue the unbelieving and haughty will of man. This may teach us how many sacrifices are necessary, and how much the human heart must be strengthened to give new life to the church.

Our own age is excited by forebodings. Not insignificant was the epoch out of which we have just passed,—that period of apostasy from the Gospel. And the sea of the present time is

\* Matthesius: Luther’s *Anfangslehre*, &c. 1621. The author quotes from the edition published in 1817, at the commemoration of the Reformation.

† Matthesius, p. 37.



still moved by the storm which then plunged so many into the abyss. A nobler thought has now found expression,—the conversion of the heathen; a sublime design, with the fulfilment of which is probably connected the new development of human culture. Not insignificant are the signs of the times:—the civilization of America, still in the vigor of nature;—the discoveries made in the hitherto unknown regions of Africa;—the fall of the Mussulman kingdom! In Europe, new strength displays itself in every province of life; more especially in the church; while, on the other hand, a secret antichristian power, and the love of licentiousness, oppose themselves to these signs of improvement with ever-increasing might.

France and Germany were foremost in the struggle of regeneration; in the conflict for the salvation of the world. We must thank Spain for the discovery of a new hemisphere, and Italy for the restoration of learning and the arts; but France, from the earliest times, has been the guardian of evangelical truth, as in the case of the Albigenses and Waldenses; and in Germany, the light has broken upon us through Huss, Wessel and Luther.

If we now inquire what was the state of the church in England, we shall find that at this time (1509—1530) it still enjoyed but little of the pure light. The Reformation did not assume in that country the noble and exalted character which it bore in Germany, France and Switzerland. Wickliff indeed had been the precursor of better times; but the light was soon troubled: there was now a blood-thirsty monarch; and with him a hesitating reformer. Henry VIII. was so blind, so impure an instrument of the grace of God, that, however great the work effected through him, we can only contemplate his rude influence with a feeling of distress. Not only are the scenes presented in the history of that period full of horror, but the truth is seen slowly working out its way, and still oppressed by the remaining half of catholicism.

It is well known how king Henry, inspired by theological vanity, ventured to enter the lists with Luther. He wrote against his book on the Babylonish captivity, in which the reformer assailed the doctrine of the seven sacraments, and defended them. This work was gratefully received by Leo X. He offered every one who should read it, an indulgence for ten years, and gave the king himself the title of ‘Defender of the Faith.’ Luther’s haughty ‘Answer’ to the king’s treatise is well

known. Henry suppressed in his kingdom every spark of pure doctrine; but the German writings were still read at Oxford and Cambridge. Tindal also, in company with Frith, translated the Bible. The New Testament was published at Antwerp in 1526. Tindal, the apostle of England, as well as his friend, perished some time after in the flames.

Thomas More, the chancellor, who so fiercely persecuted the new doctrine, was a zealous patron of the sciences, and thence became, contrary to his own will, a promoter also of the Reformation. He was an enemy to the darkness of the middle ages. But it was not allowed him to pass the steps of knowledge and culture which he himself had laid. Contented with having prepared the way for a new spiritual discipline,—for an instructed, social life, as Erasmus had done in Germany, he was ignorant of that higher species of life, which the word of God bestows without the aid of science; and when the Reformation triumphed in England, he died for the old belief.

Henry remained subject to Rome till 1527; when Divine Providence employed the passions of this heathen to break open the door for truth. Queen Catharine of Arragon had been married to Arthur, the brother of Henry, after whose death she was married to the latter. But, influenced probably by his love for Anne Boleyn, the king desired a divorce, alleging as his motive, the injury done through this marriage to his tender conscience. He did not succeed with the pope, because Catharine of Arragon was aunt of the emperor. Cranmer, in order to flatter the king, advised that the several universities should be required to give their opinion on the question; and this was actually done in the year 1530.

Most of the theologians declared themselves against the marriage of the king with the widow of his brother,—Zwingli, Œcolampadius, the French universities,\*—because the law of Moses was not annulled by the Apostles. Luther's own remark was, that the king would be guilty of a greater sin by dissolving the existing marriage, because he would thereby fix upon himself and his wife the perpetual stain of incest.

In the year 1531 the clergy declared the king head and defender of the church of England. This was the first step towards a separation from Rome. The following year, Henry married Anne Boleyn. In 1533 parliament proclaimed England inde-

\* Schröckh, *Ref. Geschichte*, t. ii. s. 538.

pendent of the papal chair, and Cranmer pronounced sentence against the validity of the king's early marriage. Thus was the great breach effected for all future times.

Burnet speaks of Calvin's subscription as appended to the formal opinion delivered by the theologians: this is found among his epistles.\* Schröckh thinks that the letter, which is without date, was written later, as Calvin at the time of the controversy was very young, and that it is cited erroneously by Burnet. It may however be answered, that Calvin in the year 1530 had acquired some influence, and that when the academies at Orleans and Bourges were appealed to, he might as a jurist and theologian be asked to give his opinion, it being well known that he studied in those schools, and was distinguished for his extraordinary ability. But it is also possible that it was only some private friend who wished him to state his sentiments on the subject. Burnet supposes that Gryneus did so. To this view of the circumstance it may be objected, that Calvin addresses the king himself. Thus, in answering the question, whether it be lawful for a man to marry the widow of his deceased brother, he says,—“God's command is clear. They err who suppose, that it is only so long as the man lives, that his brother is prohibited from marrying the wife, in case of her repudiation,—Levit. xviii. 16. God forbids the marriage of a man with the wife of his father, uncle, son, nephew. Of the wife of a brother he speaks in the same way as of the others.† Whence then has the error arisen of supposing that this connection is allowed? From Deut. xxv. 5, where God directs that, if a man die without children, his brother should marry the widow of him that is dead. But the name of brother was applied by the Hebrews to all near relations. Thus the law which commanded the marriage of the widow, was obligatory upon all relations who were not legally hindered from obeying it; and, therefore, the two laws are not opposed to each other. For God has not intended to approve in one place those incestuous marriages which in another he condemns. Boaz married Ruth, who had been married to his relation. The law, therefore, had reference to all the relations.” The laws of the Old Testament are not abrogated by the New Testament. Both the law of nature and the Romish law equally forbid such marriages. In the

\* Ed. Laus. 1576. Ep. 384. Not as Burnet says, 380.

† “Itaque si fas non est patris vel filii, patru vel nepotis uxorem habere in matrimonio, unum et idem de fratris uxore sentire convenit.” Consequently, according to Calvin's view, Henry's marriage was unlawful.

concluding passage, he says,—“I will now address myself to this very renowned and exalted prince, and earnestly pray that he may submit himself, and all his feelings, to the word of God.”

Closely connected with our subject is the consideration of the state of Italy, France, and Switzerland, with which Calvin was brought into the most intimate relation. It was not, indeed, his fault that these countries did not at once become protestant. Those who had been driven into exile for the sake of the truth flocked from all parts to Geneva, to see and hear the man who had first awakened them, and established their churches.

In Italy,\* the times of Arnold of Brescia, the scholar of Abelard; societies like those of the apostolic orders of Segarelli and Dulzen, which commanded the reading of the Scriptures; noble and literary phenomena, as in the case of Dante, show clearly how the early improvement of that country took a determined antipapistic tendency. The Reformation would soon have pervaded the whole land, had not the papal chair defended with unwonted prudence the still ever deeply-rooted ideal of a spiritual sovereignty, and, still more, had the character of the people been as healthy as in Germany. But whilst the two Saxonies eagerly embraced the party of Luther, the people of Florence delighted themselves with persecuting the noble Savonarola, and in seeing him committed to the flames, at the same time overwhelming with their adulations and shouts of joy such a pontiff as Alexander VI. The minds, however, of a better class were penetrated by the truth. Arnold of Brescia was regarded as one of the first martyrs in Italy. It was recollected how the holy Bernard himself had indignantly reproved the vices of the papacy. Men read Dante, who, a true reformer, made war against the dominion of Antichrist, and summoned the wicked fathers of the church to the judgment-seat of Christ. They read Boccaccio, the first of protestant satirists, who opened the way for Erasmus and other kindred spirits. But the pure doctrine of the Bible appears to have found few friends, the educated part of the people being chiefly employed in the study of mere philosophy.

The able biographer of Peter Martyr,† dividing the more enlightened portion of the community into three classes, thus speaks of the intellectual state of Italy at the time of the Reformation:—

\* Respecting Italy, see Schröckh, Th. i. s. 19, Th. ii. s. 770; and McCrie's Reformation in Italy.

† By F. C. Schlosser. Heidelberg, 1809, p. 366.



"There were those who cherished Platonism, and with the help of Iamblichus and Plotinus knew, while living in the world, how to exalt themselves above the world. Another party, sinking into heresy, could not distinguish between those who observed few, and those who observed many ceremonies; and cared not whether the people, regarded by Plato with such contempt because unworthy of philosophy, had a creed more or less comprehensive.

"Marsilius Ficinus and Pico of Mirandola, to name only these, afford proofs in every part of their writings, that they were ready to explain all the doctrines of the church, even those most inconsistent with Scripture, as signs and symbols. The Aristotelians, on the other hand, had long held their system in preference to the truth, and obstinately defended that which was most untenable.

"The third party, which employed itself altogether in the study of the sciences and the fine arts, and laughed at the blind superstition of the people, enjoyed the pleasures of life, and rebelled at the expense of a holy simplicity; regarding virtue and religion as valuable to the state, and as something which the better-instructed might make use of, but did not absolutely need.

"Thus the ordinary methods of study, pursued by the devoted friends of science, tended rather to make them refined heathens, and to lead them to regard Christianity in the same light as the great men of Rome in the later days of the republic viewed their state religion, than to render them capable of deriving from the study of Scripture nourishment for heart and mind. There still existed, indeed, in Italy some remains of the old sects, whose object it was to restore Christianity to its original purity; but their poverty, their want of culture, the absence of all learned institutions among them, prevented their exercising any influence in an age when learning was universally required."

But Peter Martyr's history affords striking evidence of the susceptibility of Italian minds to the pure doctrine. He was the son of a very distinguished nobleman, Stephen Vermili, who, as an admirer of the principles which Savonarola had preached at Florence, cherished a bitter hatred to monks and monkery. Picus, count of Mirandola, also published an apology for Savonarola. Laurentius Valla, who on account of his sentiments suffered banishment, and many others, had already appeared as adversaries to the papacy. Machiavelli himself, who was certainly well qualified to judge of the state of his country, looked

forward to an approaching convulsion. "The most remarkable indication," said he, "of the near overthrow of religion is, that the nearer the people are to Rome, so much the less do they show any signs of piety."\*

The reformation of the head and members was become a common jest, the three great councils of Pisa, Constance and Basel having proved so utterly fruitless. The assembly at Pisa in 1511 had resolved to effect something, and at its third session it determined not to break up till the church was reformed both in doctrine and morals. But Julius II., in order to dissolve that of Pisa, convened the council of Lateran.

It was under these circumstances that Leo X. ascended the papal throne. Every string was stretched to the uttermost; and this otherwise noble and accomplished Medicean wished in his own lovely Italy to live according to the model of the ancient heathenism: to revel in the arts, since he felt not their insufficiency to satisfy the human soul; to defend himself by a course of skilful policy, because he could not perceive that the truth is far more powerful than politics. Recognizing neither the might nor the greatness of the Germans, hidden as it was under a rude exterior, he was broken like a weak reed in the storm-wind awoke by Luther. In 1517 he dissolved the council, and believed that he had gained the victory. But this dissolution of the council was only the signal for battle.

At this time Luther's propositions found their way into Italy, and made a deep impression even upon the mass of the population. The entrance of Charles of Bourbon with the German army had also produced a powerful effect. Clement VII. was made prisoner. This remarkable circumstance shook the whole country. Rome was plundered; the pope confined in the castle of St. Angelo (1527). Sarpi remarks, that many who regarded this misfortune as a divine judgment were inclined to favor the Reformation, so that in the papal territory itself sermons were preached against the Roman church, and the number of those who called themselves Lutherans, or evangelicals, increased every day. The greatest contempt and ridicule were heaped upon the papal power in Rome; but it was remarked that the German soldiers conducted themselves with greater humanity than the catholic Spaniards and Italians. Protestantism now extended to the boundaries of Italy and Sicily.

\* On the First Decade of Livy, lib. i. cap. 12.

The duchess Renata appeared at this time, and formed her court at Ferrara. This noble, liberal-minded princess, who her whole life through was the guardian of protestantism, deserves more especial notice as the friend of Calvin. Her history may be told in few words. She was the daughter of Louis XII. and of Ann of Brittany. Her birth took place in the same year as that of Calvin; and while still a child, she was betrothed to Charles, the future emperor. This alliance being broken off, Joachim of Brandenburg, distinguished for his remarkable capacity, solicited the hand of the princess, and would have borne her from southern climes to the sandy north, but where she would still have found some kindred souls. The union, however, did not take place. France feared the enlightened views of the powerful prince. At length Hercules II. duke of Ferrara espoused her. He was a weak prince; but through this marriage, the Lord afforded for the present a protection to the awakened among the Italians. Renata's sister was the wife of Francis I., at whose court the princess was early inspired with the love of science, so ardently patronized by Francis. At Ferrara she devoted herself altogether to the study of philosophy, geometry, astronomy and the languages; and as in earlier times, Johanna of Sicily protected Petrarca and Boccaccio; and Lorenzo di Medici the exiled Greeks; and as Leo X. delighted to see himself surrounded by such men as Bembo, Sadoleto, Michael Angelo and Raphael; so Renata wished to assemble around her men of free and capacious minds, foremost among whom was the learned Morati, who had adopted the doctrine of the reformers, and was the first of those obliged to save themselves by flight. His noble character induced the duchess to attach him to her court. She also educated his accomplished daughter, who in after years gave public lectures on the ancient languages.

Renata was now occupied with the thought of openly declaring herself in favor of the Reformation. But she would not leave her church, without having gained a sufficient knowledge of the new doctrine: she therefore studied the fundamental principles of theology. At length she passed over; embracing at first the doctrine of Luther, so revered in Italy, but afterwards that of Calvin, to which she finally adhered. Calvin himself visited her, as we shall hereafter see, when he was driven out of France. The Italian protestants agreed more readily with Zwingli and Calvin, than with Luther; first, because the Latin writings of the former were more readily understood by them

than the force of Luther's German ; and, secondly, because of the contiguity of Switzerland to their own country.

We must still turn our attention to Italy. In order to make it understood how rapidly the truth was spread, we may remark, that the celebrated printer, John Frobenius\*, at Basel, printed the first edition of Luther's writings in the year 1519, and informed Luther that he had sent six hundred copies to France and Spain. At Paris they were read even by the Sorbonnists ; and Calvi, a learned bookseller at Pavia, circulated them through the whole of Italy. At Venice Luther was read with still more marked delight. The Augustin monks at Turin also circulated his books. His exposition of 'Our Father,' and his Catechism, were printed ; as also Melancthon's 'Loci Communes,' and Martin Bucer's 'Commentary on the Psalms,' under different names. Antony Brucioli of Florence translated the Bible into Italian ; and the New Testament appeared at Venice in the year 1530.

Several Italian congregations now existed ; and between the years 1530-40, public assemblies of the protestants were allowed in Venice. The Venetians still continued their attachment to Luther ; but when he wrote to his followers in their city, with such impetuosity against the Zwinglians, and said, "The papists are rather to be borne with than these," the Italians were divided into two parties by his violent views, and the protestant cause was weakened. Thence also it happened that the Italians, naturally lively and subtle, quickly formed new systems and sects (as for example the Antitrinitarians, who had subsequently so much to do with Calvin), and were in consequence easily attacked and overcome.

The Inquisition exercised the greatest prudence in its wrath. No open display was allowed, and the victims of its fury perished in silence. Thousands of protestants fled, and formed communities in Switzerland, especially in the Grisons. Paul III. instituted an inquiry, by means of an inquisitor, against the apostate monks, even in Ferrara and Modena. Yet one of the most learned prelates, Sadoletus, who plays an important part in the history of Calvin, declared that he would not employ his authority, but would spread the truth by means of Christian mildness. Julius III. now appeared in the field against the friends of the evangelical doctrine. Henry II. formed a league with him, to compel the duchess Renata to re-enter the catholic

\* Schröckh, t. i. s. 204 ; t. ii. s. 770.



church. The inquisitor Oritz was sent to her. He endeavored, with her husband, to work upon her feelings, and made every offer to win her back; but in vain. She was consequently prohibited from continuing to educate her children; and all protestants were banished from Ferrara. Renata, after the death of her husband, returned to France, where she continued to protect the protestants during the fearful persecutions which they had to endure, till the year 1575, when she died at Montargis, without in the slightest degree belying the reformed faith, much less renouncing it. She lived to witness the horrible scene of the blood-feast in 1572. Her history consequently is closely connected with that of the French reformed church.

The history of the church in France is equally interesting and distressing; the pure evangelical doctrine having there carried on a perpetual struggle, and having often been on the point of obtaining the victory which it never won. It may, however, be affirmed, that it never allowed the Gospel to be altogether involved in darkness. The retrospect is interesting at the present time; for this great struggle seems now, through the recognized rights of the evangelical church, to have been brought to a conclusion.

Who does not honor and esteem the bold preachers of the Albigenses, whose doctrine some would so willingly charge and pollute with Manichæism? Who honors and esteems not Waldo and his associates, who succeeded them? If we cannot indeed trace historically the pure doctrine of the Waldenses to the old inhabitants of the Piedmontese valleys, yet is there great historical probability, that a pure system of belief has constantly existed in those regions from the earliest times.

Powerful parties, at a later period, were formed in France against the papacy. They were often boldly supported by the princes, and the authority of the pope was altogether set at naught. The freedom of the Gallican church, which exalted the authority of councils above that of the pope, had already established a species of half-protestantism. Men of liberal minds also arose, as D'Ailly, Gerson, Clemangis; and yet has this unhappy country ever fallen a victim to its own passions; and hence the evangelical church is, to this day, in a state of deplorable weakness.

Louis XII., a noble prince, the father of his people, resolutely resisted the papal pretensions. It is even said, that he had a coin struck with the inscription, *Perdam Babylonis nomen*.

With how little fanaticism he acted towards the so-named heretics, may be seen from the following narration :—

When in the year 1501 he made a journey through Dauphiny, some of the nobility prayed him to clear the province of the Waldenses, who had dwelt from time immemorial in the mountains. The king was curious to learn what evil they had committed, and sent his father confessor Parvi to visit the accused. So favorable, however, was the information which Parvi collected to the character of the Waldenses, that the king exclaimed, "They are better Christians than we are." He accordingly commanded that the goods which had been taken from them should be restored, and that the acts of the process commenced against them should be cast into the Rhone.

Francis I. was crowned in the year 1515.\* History is undetermined whether to praise or censure him,—a ruler influenced only by his passions! He gave up the pragmatic sanction, and concluded with the pope a concordat. He loved the sciences; and carried on an epistolary correspondence with Erasmus, who exercised a beneficial influence on his mind. Many men of great capacity appeared in France during his reign: John Du Bellay; William Cop; William Budé, a man of great learning and fine genius, and who established a large academy at Paris, were numbered among his friends. Somewhat later, Ramus, the famous antagonist of the Aristotelian philosophy, at Paris; Scaliger at Thoulouse, and many others, gave lustre to the period; and subsequently, the instructors of Calvin, Peter Stella, a learned jurisconsult, in the university of Orleans, and Melchior Wolmar, a German, at Bourges.

Beza mentions in his Church History the great difficulty attending the introduction of the sciences into France. "The Sorbonne," he says, "opposed itself to all instruction with such fury, that, if we had believed our masters, to study Greek, and to pay some attention to Hebrew, however little, was one of the greatest heresies in the world." These people were no theologians. Of Budé, he says, "He was so fortunate in his erudition as to find a king of excellent mind and a great lover of literature, though he knew only his mother tongue. Having dedicated to him that excellent book, 'Commentaries on the Greek Language,' he persuaded him that the three languages should

\* Francis was the son of Charles of Orleans, duke of Angoulême, and Louisa of Savoy. Louis, seeing his restless disposition as a boy, said of him, "This great booby will spoil all."

be studied in the schools and universities of his kingdom, and that he ought to erect a magnificent college of the three languages." This, indeed, was not accomplished; but professors were nominated. "God," says the zealous Beza, "must either by miracle, or by natural means, restore to us the knowledge of languages, that we may be able again to read the superscription in three languages on the cross of our Lord."

Theologians soon arose in France. Jacob Lefevre d'Etampes, the instructor and friend of Calvin, prepared the way for him by banishing the scholastic philosophy, expounding Scripture, diffusing the knowledge of languages, and creating a love for new ideas. In the year 1512 he published a Commentary on St. Paul's Epistles; in 1522 another on the four Gospels; in 1523 his translation of the Gospels was published at Paris; and the whole Bible in 1530 at Antwerp. How this translation was used we shall see hereafter. Beza praises Lefevre.\* He was persecuted by the Sorbonne because, after a long struggle against perverted learning, he succeeded in restoring the proper study of philosophy and the mathematics, and banished that of the schools.

That which the duchess of Ferrara was in Italy, Margaret,† the sister of the king, was at the same time in France. She was born at Angoulême in 1492, and became the wife of Charles of Alençon. A worthy woman, and endowed with great prudence, she afforded no slight assistance to Francis during his captivity in Spain. He showed her remarkable affection; and she, and his mistress the duchess d'Etampes, almost induced him to embrace the protestant faith; very often, at least, subduing his rage when ready to break out against the reformed. He commonly called her his darling. She contracted a second marriage with Henri d'Albret, king of Navarre; and Johanna d'Albret, the heroic mother of Henry IV., was her daughter.

Margaret loved the protestants so well, that she explained their principles in a book, entitled 'Le Miroir de l'Ame Pécheresse,' and which was condemned by the Sorbonne. This only served

\* On his Works, p. 20, n. 1.

† Her works, as characteristic of the period, are:—1. 'Nouvelles de la Reine de Navarre,' in the style of Boccaccio. 2. 'Les Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses,' containing 'Quatre Mystères ou Comédies pieuses et deux Farces.' The holy and the profane are here mingled together with curious simplicity. 3. 'The Triumph of the Lamb.' 4. 'Complaint of a Prisoner' (probably Francis in Spain). She also composed some 'Chansons Spirituelles.' But her most celebrated work is 'Le Miroir de l'Ame Pécheresse.' She selected as her device, a sunflower turned towards the sun, with the motto, *Non inferiora secutus*, and a lily with two pearls, *Mirandum naturæ opus*.

to give greater influence to her decision in favor of the reformed doctrines. At her persuasion, the king wrote to the parliament on behalf of many learned men, who were persecuted on account of their belief. Her general character has been thought deserving of the highest praise. Of her poetical talent we may speak with respect. Her manners were perfectly pure; but her verses are written with a *naïveté* which sometimes oversteps the bounds of tenderness.\*

Fevre d'Etaples, spoken of above, was the particular friend of this queen. He lived some time in the house of the enlightened bishop Briçonnet; then in Strasburg, still fleeing from the persecution; and lastly in Paris, where he was tutor to Charles, duke of Orleans, the third son of Francis I. After a long, agitated, and very useful life passed in unquiet France, Margaret took him in 1530 to Nerac, her residence, where, after seven years of tranquillity, he died at the age of a hundred. As characteristic of the times, and of the state of feeling then known in France, we may relate, that one day shortly before his death he broke forth, deeply agitated, into a flood of tears. Being asked by the queen and others as to the cause of his distress, Lefevre answered sorrowfully, that he could not help reproaching himself for this,—that while he had imparted to so many believers the pure Gospel, and had admonished them to expose their life for its sake, he himself was dying in quiet, and had hindered himself by flight from sharing in that glorious confession.† It appears from his life, that he united with a lofty feeling for what is good, a soft and yielding character.

In 1521 Luther first obtained celebrity in France through the

\* Beza (Hist. Eccles. t. i. 5) says she was a woman of excellent understanding, and raised up by God to overthrow, as far as was possible, the cruel designs of A. du Prat, chancellor of France, and others who incited the king against the so-called heretics.

The following is a specimen of her religious poetry from 'Miroir de l'Âme':

"La mort est chose heureuse  
A l'âme que de luy est amoureuse (de Dieu).  
O mort, par vous j'espère tant d'honneur,  
Qu'à deux genoux en cry, soupir et pleur!  
Je vous requiers, venez hâtivement  
Et mettez fin à mon gémissement.  
O heureuses âmes, filles très saintes,  
En la cité de Jerusalem jointes:  
Baissez vos yeux par misération  
Et regardez ma desolation!"

† His works are:—1. '*Un Traité des trois Magdelaines.*' 2. '*De Duplici et Unica Magdalena;*' this work caused him some uneasiness. 3. '*Psalterium Quintuplex.*' 4. '*Commentarii in Psalmos, Ecclesiastem, Evangelia et Paulum.*' 5. '*Agones Martyrum Mensis Januarii.*'



proceedings of the Sorbonne, which, after his disputation with Eck at Leipsig, had condemned him as a virulent heretic. Many of his writings were received with great praise in the country, and some of them were translated by Louis Berquin. The translator was also persecuted by the Sorbonne, and more particularly because he circulated Melancthon's Manual. According to Beza,\* 'Antiluther,' levelled against Luther, was also written and published at this time.

But the German doctrines were firmly rooted in every part of France. Since 1521, the first little protestant congregation had been established at Meaux, where the bishop of the city allowed several scholars to reside; among whom were Lefevre and George Farel, at that time teacher in the *Collège le Moine* at Paris. But this community was soon dispersed. Farel removed to Neufchatel and Geneva, and there prepared the way for Calvin. The queen of Navarre protected the fugitives. Still, when the preachers began to fall away, and Briçonnet himself became weak, the lambs of the flock did not; for this little church of Meaux, consisting as it did of poor mechanics, afforded through their resolution such an example as none other did, and became the seed of many more.

The first martyr at this period was John Leclerc, who was apprehended at Meaux in 1523, because he had affixed to the church a writing against indulgences. He was publicly whipped at Paris, and branded.† When he afterwards, in prosecution of his business, removed to Metz, he there also planted the evangelical church, but after a year was taken and executed. Not long after, the young Pawannes, who at first recanted, but repented bitterly of his weakness,‡ was burnt at Paris, and bore his sufferings with the greatest patience. After him (that is, in 1525) perished l'Hermite de Livry before Nôtre Dame. The great bell was tolled to summon the people to the execution; and the doctors who witnessed the constancy with which he bore his sufferings, proclaimed that he was a wretch whom they were now giving over to eternal fire.

It was about this time§ that the king returned from his captivity. When he heard that the Lutheran heresy was continually on the increase, and it was whispered to him that this had

\* Hist. Eccles. t. i. p. 5.

† His mother looked on and exclaimed, *Vive Jesus Christ, et ses enseignes.*

‡ "De quoi se repentant peu après avec grands regrets et soupirs."—Beza.

§ Beza, l. 7.

drawn upon France the anger of God, he issued an order that the heretics should be given over to the civil authorities. In 1526 Denis de Rieux was burnt at Meaux, because he had said that the mass destroyed the efficacy of Christ's death and sufferings, to which declaration he remained true to his last moment. Now also came Berquin's turn to suffer: he was put to death by strangulation.\* Francis Lambert was more fortunate. He fled from Avignon, laid aside his Franciscan habit and hastened to Wittenberg, where he was the first of the French teachers to enter into the marriage state. He afterwards labored at Metz, and subsequently as a teacher of theology at Marburg. The part which he took in the reformation of Hesse was important: he declared himself in favor of Zwingli's doctrine of the eucharist, and died in 1530.

The parliament of Paris exhibited at this period an unrelenting severity. In 1531 the allied princes, on the formation of the league of Smalcald, endeavored to open the eyes of the king; but he was incapable of entering into exact inquiry, was too much distracted with worldly affairs, and too subject to foreign influence. Policy only induced him to respect the German league. Religion was to him a thing of secondary consideration, and it was to queen Margaret that the reformers were indebted for not being altogether destroyed. In three universities, God's voice was heard (1529)—Orleans, Bourges, Thoulouse. Even Paris, for a short time, possessed three evangelical preachers. By Margaret's care, divine service was regularly performed in Guienne and Bearn according to the reformed doctrine; and the Lord's supper was administered in both kinds. She went still further, and availing herself of the influence of Parvi, the king's confessor, obtained a translation of the Common Prayer Book, 'Les Heures,' into French, and having expunged what was superstitious, sent it to the press. She also now published her own work, 'Le Miroir de l'Âme Pécheresse,' in which no mention was made of purgatory,† or of the saints; and the *Salve Regina* was addressed to the Redeemer. The Sorbonne, greatly enraged, preached against this book. A play even was acted, in which the queen appeared as one of the furies of hell. Her work was formally condemned.

\* D. Merlin, who conducted him to the place of punishment, said, before all the people, and to the great vexation of the judges, &c., that no better Christian had died for a hundred years than Berquin.

† Beza, l. 13.



Calvin was at this time in Paris, and had commenced his labors. One of his earliest letters, addressed to Fr. Daniel, in the year 1533,\* gives a full account of the satirical drama above alluded to. "At the beginning of October, when the students who pass from the language class to that of dialectics have the custom of acting a play, for the sake of practice, they performed one in the Navarre Gymnasium more than sufficiently full of gall and vinegar. The following were the characters represented. First of all, a queen, who, as is customary with women, was wholly employed in spinning, or with the affairs of the kitchen, and her needle. Then appeared a fury, who approaching with torches, encouraged her to throw away her needle and bodkin. For a little while she withstood his persuasions; but no sooner had she yielded than a Gospel was put into her hand, and she straightway forgot all she had formerly learnt, all she had been accustomed to do, and almost her very self. At last she arms herself with tyranny, and pursues with all imaginable arts of cruelty the unfortunate and the innocent. Other things were added, in the same style, most unjustly indeed, against that excellent woman, whom they openly persecute with their insults. The affair for some days remained undiscovered. But as truth is a child of time, so the whole was at length made known to the queen; and it seemed to her that if this matter were allowed to pass unpunished, it would be an encouragement for the impertinent rashness of those who eagerly sought after new things. The prætor, accompanied by a hundred officers of police, proceeded to the Gymnasium, and ordered the place to be surrounded that no one might pass out. He then entered the building with some few of his men, but did not succeed in discovering the author of the drama. It is said, that the latter had not expected such a visit, but that being by chance in the chamber of a friend, he heard the noise before he was seen, and so hid himself till he was able to escape. The prætor, however, apprehended the scholars who had performed in the play; and though the chief of the Gymnasium resisted this proceeding, and some stones were thrown from the building during the struggle, the prætor kept fast hold of his prisoners, and forced them to explain what parts they had acted. Thus was all made known."

The second part of the letter describes the perplexity of the university, when the king resolved to punish it for the condemnation of the book. Nicolas Cop, the rector, first appeared, and

\* Ed. Laus. Ep. 1.

represented the affair to the four faculties of medicine, philosophy, theology, and canon law. He called the doctors to account for their arrogant behavior towards the queen, "that motherly pattern of science and virtue" (*virtutum omnium et bonarum literarum matrem*), and threatened them with the anger of the king. Nothing remained but to deny the fact. At last, Clericus, the parish priest of St. Andrew, poured forth a long eulogium on the king, against whose firmness, he said, the evil counsels of some wicked members of the theological faculty could happily in no wise prevail. Of the matter itself he pretended to be profoundly ignorant; and the rector thereupon declared, with the consent of all present, that the university did not recognize the censure which had placed the queen's book among forbidden, or censured publications.\*

Some time after the death of Margaret, Johanna Albret, also queen of Navarre, appeared in France. No less distinguished than her mother, she was the protector of the protestants, the friend of Calvin, and the centre of the reformed circle. She was

\* The following lines are from the work, 'Le Miroir de l'Ame,' which so offended the Sorbonne. Mary says to the Lord:—

"O quel repos de mère et filz ensemble !  
 Mon doux enfant, mon Dieu, honneur et gloire  
 Soit à vous seul et à chacun notoire  
 De ce qu'il plait à votre humilité,  
 Moy, moins que rien toute nichilité,  
 Mère nommer : plus est le cas estrange,  
 Et plus en ha vostre bonté louenge.  
*Jesus only is our righteousness.*  
 O mon Sauveur par Foi je suis plantée,  
 Et par amour en vous jointe et entée.  
 Quelle union, quel bienheureté,  
 Puisque par Foi j'ai de vous seureté.  
 Donc Monseigneur, qui me condamnera :  
 Et quel juge jamais me damnera,  
 Quand celuy-là, qui m'est donné pour juge  
 Est mon espoux, mon père, mon refuge.  
 Jesus Christ qui est mon Redempteur  
 Qui par sa mort nous a restitué  
 Notre heritage, et s'est constitué  
 Notre advocat, devant Dieu présentant  
 Ses mérites : qui sont et valent tant,  
 Que ma grande depte en est si surmontée  
 Que pour rien n'est en jugement comptée.  
 Quand vos vertus, mon Sauveur présentez  
 Certes assez justice contentez,  
 Et sur la Croix par votre passion  
 En avez fait la satisfaction.  
 Moy doncques, ver de terre, moins que rien  
 Et chienne morte, ordure des fiens,  
 Cesser dois bien parler de l'altitude  
 De ceste amour."

married to that weak king, Antony Bourbon of Navarre, who renounced the protestant faith. Many of Calvin's writings, addressed to the king, afford evidence of the anxious efforts which he made to convert him. But if he failed in this respect, he succeeded in awakening a noble spirit in the queen, which afterwards descended to Henry IV. She willingly committed herself to the guidance of him and Beza; and it was she who in perilous times uttered that heroic sentiment, "If I held in my hand the kingdom of Navarre, and the prince, my son, I would sooner cast both into the sea, than partake of the mass." In her will are these words, addressed to her son,—“God will honor those who honor him, and dishonor those who dishonor him;” which the church of Geneva once, in a critical moment, brought to Henry's recollection.

But in order to form a correct notion of the life, the extraordinary labors, and the severe language of the reformers, especially Calvin's, we must still further describe the sentiments which animated France and Italy at this period.

The powerful spirit of the middle ages, so rich in action; the strong, unbridled force of nature, with the rudeness which to us appears so fruitful in crime and extravagance, still everywhere existed. On the other hand, a high species of culture was exercising its softening influence; a classical spirit had arisen; and with it was united in wonderful combination, love for true art, for the ideal of the beautiful,—for antiquity. The powers of the olden time struggled with those of the new; as, in the present age, the elements of a new, fresh culture are contending with an old and almost worn-out life.

Let us read the petulant Rabelais, the physician and pastor, the representative of the rude merriment of his time, and then look at Italy, where science and poetry had reached the highest grade of perfection. But the productions which sprung from these opposite species of cultivation were patronized without distinction in the court of Francis I. The monarch kept the rough Benvenuto Cellini, that type of his people, constantly at Paris, and greatly esteemed him. Benvenuto produced immortal specimens of art, and wielded the dagger with equal skill, regarding both as equally honorable. Here we discover the excess of cunning practised by the Roman court, which thus sought by artificial and vicious means to support the half-ruined edifice of its power. To education, to violence and subtlety, were added a childish love for ornament and expense, and unbridled licen-

tiousness. There were splendid courts, in which the most intellectual men moved hand in hand with warlike knights, who still cherished in their hearts the imaginary glory of private combat, and were ready at any moment to draw the sword. Of this, striking examples were afforded in France at the courts of Francis I. and Henry II. and in the camp of Henry IV. The latter began his career shortly after Calvin left the stage; and his friend, the severe Sully, fought as a brave knight while he was engaged upon those memoirs, which, to the present day, give us so correct a picture of his times.

With these various elements of a wild strength, which raved like roaring billows against the rock of the Gospel; with the three mighty masters of temporal dominion, Charles V., Francis I., Henry VIII., not one of whom knew aught of the pure light, came the reformers into conflict. It was Calvin's especial charge to bridle by the most powerful moral rule, the passionate, highly excited, but noble natures of the South, and to render them capable of that cultivation which had its proper origin in the reformed church.

But to understand the important character of the means which he employed, we must carefully survey his individual position at Geneva. It was not his lot to labor among intelligent Germans, with whom truth and kindness are innate, but in a city where the rude strength of nature enjoyed unlimited freedom; in a self-formed republic; among a people consisting of Savoyards, Schweizers, and fugitives out of all the neighboring countries; a people, that is, upon whom it was for him first to impress a distinctive national character. And this he effected with the same success as his other designs, so that the little state of Geneva is, even to this day, marked by a character peculiarly its own. But we shall speak of Switzerland, and the theatre so particularly assigned to him, when we see him commencing his labors there. Of Scotland, the state of which he also influenced, we can only speak in a much later portion of the work.



## CHAPTER II. A.D. 1509—1525.

### CALVIN'S CHILDHOOD. — STUDIES. — EARLY CONVERSION. — FIRST LABORS.

THE guiding care of God in the lives of his servants may be traced even in their earliest childhood. Thus Luther, destined to become the man of the people, was the offspring of poor miners.\* "I am a peasant's son," said he; "my father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were honest peasants." And all his life long he manifested his ability to speak convincingly to the people. Calvin, who was destined to employ his influence in the world as a theologian and thinker, enjoyed from his childhood the benefit of a learned education.

Calvin was born at Noyon in Picardy, July 10, 1509.† His father, Gerhard Cauvin or Calvin, was *Procureur Fiscal* of the lordship of Noyon, and secretary of the diocese. His grandfather Böttcher lived in a neighboring village, Le Pont l'Évêque, where Calvin had many relations, who however, out of hatred, laid aside his name. His mother was Anna Franke of Cambray. Of the outward appearance of young Calvin, destitute as we are of information, we can say little. The wood engravings, found in old editions of his works, present noble and very characteristic traits of countenance, but of one worn by toil and anxiety, and offering a strange contrast to the round, full, and cheerful physiognomy of Dr. Luther. This however may not have been the case in Calvin's youth. The nose is finely shaped. His father was well formed, and his mother was considered beautiful. In some old editions printed at Geneva in his life-time, he is represented with a little cap upon his head, with a pointed beard, and his eyes raised to heaven. Beneath is this motto, *Prompte et sincere*: "Promptly and honestly."‡

Beza, who knew best how to describe him correctly, says, "He was of middle stature, somewhat pale; his skin was rather

\* Born Nov. 10, 1483, of Hans Luther and Margaretha Lindemännin, who removed from the village of Mohre to Eisleben at the fair.

† He died May 27, 1564; aged 54 years, 10 months, 17 days.

‡ The expression of his countenance in the portraits of him is mostly severe but not ill-natured, except in the libels upon him, as in Bolsecs.



brown ; and his clear, sparkling eyes gave token of his keen, lively spirit, and this even till his death. In his dress he was very neat, but without ornament, as became his great simplicity." His father, a man of powerful understanding, was highly beloved by the nobility of the district, and was remarkable for severity of character. This is mentioned by Calvin himself. Of his mother it is said, that her feelings were colored by the age in which she lived, and that she was animated by an anxious piety. Faith was early awakened in her heart. She had been taught to pray under the open sky—a blessed means of impressing upon young minds a feeling of the presence of God.\*

We possess a notice written by Calvin himself, in the preface to his Commentary on the Psalms, in which, when he was already advanced in years, he reflects, in the outpouring of his heart, upon his whole life, and on God's dealings with him. He rejoices and praises God, that, as he took David from the sheep-folds, and highly exalted him, so he had elected him, little as he originally was, to the high dignity of a preacher of the Gospel. We learn also from the same writing, that his father destined him, while still a boy, to the study of theology, but afterwards changed his intentions.

Drelincourt† has preserved some notices worthy of credit respecting the family and early years of Calvin. Jaques Desmay and Jaques Levasseur, catholics and sorbonnists, have given extracts out of the archives of Noyon, which agree with the above and supply some defects. The former says, "Calvin was born at Noyon, in the place where now stands La Maison du Cerf. He was baptized in the church of St. Godeberte, and studied in his early years in the Collège des Capettes. Some have said that he was a chorister ; others, a canon of Noyon ; but I have learnt there that he was neither the one nor the other. I have discovered, however, that he was a chaplain and curate, and that he also obtained a chapel."

The house in which Calvin was born, was, from hatred to his name, pulled down ; and an inhabitant of the city, it is said, who rebuilt it, was hung before the door.‡

He was educated with the children of the noble family of Mommor, the most honorable in the district. It was with

\* Tischer relates this ; but the source of his information is not known.

† Défense de Calvin, p. 158.

‡ This is stated by Varillas, Hist. d. Révol., an author not deserving much credit, and especially unworthy of it in matters of controversy.

lasting gratitude that he remembered this period of his life ; and he dedicated his first work, the Commentary on Seneca, to a Mommor, the prelate of St. Eloi, with whom he had studied. "Brought up," he says, "as a child in your house ; devoted to the same studies as yourself, the first instruction which I received was derived from the life and cultivation of your own very noble family." Young Calvin, by his natural ability, it is said, soon surpassed his fellow-students.

In his twelfth year, his father, who was not rich, procured for him an appointment in the *Chapelle de la Gésine*. He destined him to the study of theology, because in his tender years he had manifested extraordinary piety, and was a sharp reprover of the follies of his schoolfellows ; a fact which Beza derived from undoubted catholic sources, when Calvin had already acquired celebrity.

Calvin was sent by his father, with the younger members of the Mommor family, to the high school at Paris. Here he found Maturnius Cordier (Régent au Collège de la Marche), a learned and pious instructor, who afterwards abjured popery and lived with Calvin at Geneva, where he died at the age of eighty-five, in the same year with his pupil Calvin. From the Collège de la Marche, Calvin passed to the Collège Montaigu, where he met with a Spaniard who taught the scholastic philosophy, and greatly improved his excellent capacity. The extraordinary gifts of the young man were here strikingly displayed. His mind was so active, that he soon left all his fellow-students behind, and was able to pass from the language classes to those of dialectics and the higher sciences. Very different in this respect from Luther, who, endowed with greater power of imagination, was inclined, it is said, to enthusiasm, Calvin was remarkable for sedateness and earnestness, and brought forth the fruits of a careful education, and of a life spent with useful instructors.

In the year 1525, when Calvin was sixteen years old, the world presented a vast scene of confusion. War was raging, and the king of France had been made prisoner at the battle of Pavia. It was a period fruitful in crime. King Francis, freed by a wicked pope from all the obligations of truth and integrity, took an oath upon the Gospel, which he secretly despised ; and whilst Bourbon, the emperor's general in the year 1527, was infamously assailing Rome and making the pope a prisoner, Charles ordered prayers to be offered up in all the churches for the pontiff's deliverance. Quietly, in the mean time, was that preacher of re-

penitance preparing himself, from whom they were all, at length, to hear words of truth. It is much to be lamented that we have little information respecting his studies at this time. The letters which he sent from college to his friends at home have not been preserved. In these he no doubt expressed his youthful indignation.

Having reached his eighteenth year, he received the living of Marteville, altogether against rule, for he was not yet in orders, having received only the tonsure. He changed the parish of Marteville for that of Pont l'Evêque. In the acts of the chapter of Noyon, in Desmay, it is said,\* "he was appointed curate of Pont l'Evêque, where his grandfather resided, and where his son Gerard was baptized. Thus they delivered up the sheep to the care of the wolf." It seems that his father had availed himself of his influence with the bishop to procure means for allowing his distinguished son to continue his studies.† He was presented to the cure by *Messire Claude de Hangest, abé de St. Eloy*. He felt a childish, proud delight at his promotion; for he says "a certain disputation made me a pastor;" and although not yet ordained, he preached many times to the people in the village. No trace of his ordination can be found in the records of his life.‡

Looking now at Luther, how different was Calvin's lot to his! Till his fourteenth year, when he was received into the house of Conrad Cotta, the former was obliged to support himself by singing and praying before people's doors.§ Both however discovered at an early period the corruptions of the catholic church. Calvin was aided by the happy circumstances of his life; while Luther, who acquired the degree of master in his one-and-twentieth year, and in his four-and-twentieth was a professor of Aristotelian philosophy, beheld those corruptions in the very focus of pollution, when he was sent to Rome on the business of his order.

Calvin did not remain true to his purpose to serve the catholic church. He says that his father, who perhaps foresaw the approaching struggle, considered it better to engage him in the study of the law. It is curious enough, that Luther's parents and relations also wished to devote him to the same profession.

\* Drelincourt, 168.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Calvin was never ordained priest, and did not enter the ecclesiastical state. Bayle, art. Calvin, Beza.

§ Mathesius. This author relates that Luther in his fourteenth year went to the school at Magdeburg. He had then to seek his bread, and cry for it *propter Deum*. What is to be great must first be little.

Calvin employed his knowledge of legal science, in after years, when he took part in the affairs of a new state, to considerable advantage. He lost his father at an early age, as we learn from one of his letters. According however to Beza's account, it happened when Calvin was about twenty-three years old, and was studying at Bourges, that is, three years later than the date of the letter. This letter,\* the earliest document in his hand, is dated May 6, 1528, when he was a youth of eighteen or nineteen. It was written to a friend, Nicolas du Chemin (Chemmins) from Noyon, whither he had returned from Paris or Orleans. A youthful spirit breathes in every line, and it is marked by the character which distinguishes his later correspondence—by friendship, conscientiousness, and truth:—

“The promise which I gave you, on setting out, soon to be with you again, kept me for a long time in a state of uncertainty; the sickness of my father, while I was preparing to return to you, creating a new cause of delay. But when the physician gave hopes of his recovery, I then saw nothing in this delay but that the desire to rejoin you, which originally moved me deeply, grew still greater by the intervention of a few days. In the mean time, one day after another has passed away, and at last, every hope of preserving my father's life has vanished. The approach of death is certain. But, at all events, I shall see you again. Remember me to Francis Daniel; to Philip, and all the rest who are with you. Have you put yourself yet under the professors of literature? Take care that your discretion does not make you idle. Farewell, dear Chemin; my friend, dearer than life!”

Young Calvin now became acquainted, for the first time, with a Bible. It was that, perhaps, of Faber Stapulensis, or the still unprinted translation of Robert Olivetan, his relation.† He at that time understood neither Greek nor Hebrew, although he had preached. But no sooner did he discover the errors of the catholic church, than he resigned his benefice.

At the suggestion of his father, he had left Paris and entered the university of Orleans, in order to study law under Pierre de l'Etoile, *Petrus Stella*, president of the parliament of Paris (le plus aigu jurisconsulte de France); subsequently he removed to Bourges, and studied under André Alciat.

\* MSS. ex. Bibl. Gen.

† Thus Luther also first met with a Latin Bible in the Augustin monastery at Erfurt.



But however diligently he devoted himself to this science, the voice of conscience urged him still more powerfully to the study of the Bible, and the love of truth gained the victory. Another excellent man, with whom he became acquainted at Bourges, afforded him great help. This was Melchior Wolmar,\* a German of Rotweil, who taught him Greek, and strengthened his still unsettled principles, so that he even began to publish his new convictions by preaching. To this Wolmar he was in great measure indebted for his conversion. Calvin openly declared his gratitude to him in 1546: †

"I remember how ready you were to help me, and as often as occasion offered, to prove your love to me; and with what diligence you labored to instruct me. Especially do I bear in mind that period when my father sent me to study jurisprudence. I learnt Greek under your guidance; and it is not your fault if I have not made farther progress, for you would have afforded me a helping hand through the whole course, had not the death of my father called me away."

Some expressions of Beza‡ show the then state of France, and Calvin's youthful zeal:—

"God about this time made his voice heard at Orleans, Bourges, and Toulouse, three cities with universities. There were some few indeed at Orleans who knew the truth, as for example, F. Daniel, an advocate, and Nicolas du Chemin; but this was as good as nothing (*mais cela et rien étoit tout un*), till Calvin, still a very young man, but already marked out as an excellent instrument for the work of the Lord, came to Orleans to study jurisprudence. Through God's grace, however, he devoted his best hours to theology; and in a short time he so combined science with zeal for the kingdom of God, that he wonderfully promoted the cause in many families; not by an affected excellency of speech, which he always hated, but by such depth and force of language that no one could hear him, even at that time, without admiration." When he was at Bourges, he strengthened all the faithful residing in that city, and preached

\* Schlosser, pp. 18, 19. Wolmar instructed Beza in 1528, at Orleans, and then at Bourges, where, being professor, he received him into his house. Wolmar was married, and took only a few pupils. Calvin became acquainted with Beza at Bourges. Wolmar was soon after called to Tübingen as Würtemberg counsellor. "*Cujus doctrinam, pietatem, cæterasque virtutes, admirabilem in erudienda juventute dexteritatem nunquam satis possim prædicare.*"—*Beza*.

† Preface to the Commentary on II. Epist. Corin.

‡ Hist. Eccles. l. i. pp. 9, 10.



in several castles in the surrounding district. Among others, the lord of Lignièrès is mentioned, who with his wife gladly heard him. Speaking of Calvin he said, "Now this man teaches us at least something new."

Calvin has himself recorded of his university days, that when a youth at Orleans, he took the place of the teachers in their absence, and lectured with much approbation. The degree of doctor was bestowed upon him without the usual fees.

Beza describes his diligence at the university, as observed by many of his friends and companions, then living. It was his custom, after a moderate supper, to pass half the night in study, and the next morning, as soon as he woke, to think over again, and to complete what he had learned over night. By these night watchings, he acquired his vast and exact learning, and sharpened his natural powers of thought, but by the same means he prepared for himself bodily suffering and an early death.

Having finished his university course, he seems to have resided at Paris, but only for a short time. Some of his letters indicate that he was in Paris at an earlier period. Thus one to Francis Daniel is dated from Paris, 24th of June, 1529. In this, Calvin, then twenty years of age,\* and when he had not yet openly renounced the catholic religion, describes to his friend how he had warned his sister not hastily to become a nun:—

"We arrived here the other day, but I was so much wearied by the journey, that I could not for the first four days set a step out of doors. Although I could scarcely hold myself up, I spent my time in receiving the visits of my friends. On Sunday I went to the convent with Cop, who wished to accompany me, in order that, according to your desire, I might fix a day with the ladies of the convent for your sister to take the vows. I was answered that she, together with some others, had already received the necessary permission, according to the solemn custom of the College of Sisters. Among them, I found the daughter of a banker of Orleans, your brother's master. While he was speaking with the abbess, I took occasion to examine your sister's sentiments, to see whether she was about to take the vows with entire satisfaction, and whether her mind did not vacillate. I exhorted her many times to tell me freely and with confidence whatever there might be to disturb her tranquillity. Never saw I anything more compliant or ready. One might say

\* MSS. ex. Bibl. Gen.

she was playing with puppets when she spoke of the vows. I did not want to change her intention. That was not the object of my visit; but I besought her not to depend too much upon her own strength, lest she might unthinkingly make promises; but to rest altogether on the strength of God in whom we are and live. In the meanwhile, the abbess gave me an opportunity of speaking to her. When I persisted on her fixing a day, she left it to me, but under the condition that the \* \* \* which you have at Orleans should be there in the course of eight days.

“With regard to myself, I have as yet no sure place of refuge, although I might have many, if I would consent to take advantage of the liberality of my friends. Coiffart’s father has so kindly offered me his house, that you would say nothing could be pleasanter to me than to join myself to his son. Coiffart himself insists upon it most earnestly, and prays me to become an inmate of their house; and nothing is more precious to me than this good-will of a friend, whose society, as you can bear witness, is so highly agreeable and useful. I should, therefore, have immediately accepted the proposal, had I not determined to devote myself this year to Damesius, whose school is situated at a very great distance from Coiffart’s house. All friends greet you; especially Coiffart and Vierman, with whom I unite. Greet your mother, your wife, and your sister Francisca. Farewell.”

In another letter (Nov. 13, 1529), he expresses, and always in a cheerful style, his especial gratitude for the support which this Daniel rendered him: “He gives himself to him and all that he has besides. Moreover, he will be always ready to ask new favors: *Neque enim fœneraris beneficia, sed gratuita largiris.* He jests respecting his so frequently drawing upon his friend:—*Forte videar oblique pecuniam exigere, sed ne tu oblique mordax, et parum benignus interpret, nisi ut soles, lepide jocularis.* Thus have you always shown yourself the direct opposite of that proud Mæcenæ (a disagreeable patron, that is, whom Calvin had in his eye). *Nunc quoniam non potest mores suos nobis accommodare, sit assentator suus et plêno seu verius turgido pectore foveat ambitionem.* He greets Wolmar, whom he simply names Melchior, and shows how quickly he desired his books to be returned:—*Odysseam Homeri quam Sucqueto commodaveram, finges a me desiderari et receptam penes te habebis.*”

Another letter is directed to Nicolas du Chemin, from Paris, on the eve of St. Simon, 1529. He sends him, according to

promise, a representation mixed up with some novelties, which he was to make known with great circumspection. We have only the accompanying letter, in which however, as in all the early documents, we may trace that strict conscientiousness which distinguished him in little things as well as great. He regarded nothing as trifling: he passed over nothing in the French fashion as indifferent, especially in matters of friendship. He greeted all his friends, except F—, “whom I have resolved to soften by silence, since I have not been able either by gentleness or by scolding to get from him the slightest attention. What is worse than all, when his brother came here, he did not send me a single greeting by him.”

It seems that, in the case of Calvin, so earnest and zealous, the inward conversion was effected without a protracted struggle. With the lively and enthusiastic Luther, this was an exciting event: a storm, and the death of his friend Alexius, who was struck down near him, or, according to others, was seized and stabbed, affected him violently. He regarded the circumstance as a divine visitation, and became a monk. Augustine himself had to endure a six years' conflict. Calvin relates, that he was so obstinately fixed in popish superstition, that it seemed difficult indeed to free him from such a quagmire, when God overcame him by a sudden conversion,\* and subjected him to his will. He was endowed with a most happy nature. To this may be added the influence of those prosperous circumstances arising from his condition in life, and which he so gratefully acknowledged. His character and powers were developed with more ease, in better proportion, and more tranquilly than those of Luther, who was long tormented with visions of terror and with melancholy. This explains how it was that Calvin could so early take his part with safety, and set forth that system of doctrine which formed the groundwork of all his future spiritual life. Still the following indication exists, in a letter to Sadolet, of the inward struggle which he had to experience previous to his conversion, that is, before he found Jesus, and while he was subject to the papacy:—“And when I had attended to all these things (catholic ceremonies), and while I yet trusted to them in some degree, very far was I notwithstanding from the enjoyment of tranquillity of conscience; for whenever I descended into myself, or raised my heart to thee, such extreme horror surprised me,

\* Pr. ad Ps.

that neither purifications nor satisfactions could heal me. Alas ! the more closely I examined myself, so much the sharper became the stings of my conscience. To such a degree was this the case, that neither solace nor comfort existed for me, except in so far as I could deceive myself and forget myself.\* Many passages also in his 'Institutions' indicate how well he knew the soul's conflict, and that he could therefore deeply sympathize with those who endured it. His whole correspondence and his spiritual labors may be cited to the same purport.†

That Calvin's conversion at this time was sincere and fundamental, is proved not only by his state of mind, and by his preaching the Gospel in France at the period of such danger, but also by his works, in which such an invincible firmness, and such deep convictions of the truth as it is in Jesus, are manifested, that his very latest productions bear much the same character. They exhibit, indeed, that entire conviction and assurance to which it would seem a man can only attain in such times of trial. He questions not whether others believe as he does ; and from thenceforward the peculiar belief, the conviction established by an inward revelation, that he is elected in Jesus for eternity, becomes permanently rooted. Then, although the struggle continues (for the elect as well as all others are exposed to struggles), yet never is there any appearance that this feeling of election can be shaken. On the contrary, there is an increasing sense of inward tranquillity, and this defined assurance may arise immediately from the believer's feeling that he belongs to God. The whole of life passes over the soul as a whirlwind. Calvin found indeed much already done by Luther. In order to obtain peace of conscience, the latter was obliged to overthrow the whole edifice of Romish error, and this could only be effected by degrees ; hence the struggle had to be perpetually renewed.

In order thoroughly to comprehend the unchristian character of the doctrine of indulgences, it was necessary for Luther to discover the ground of our justification. When this was found in Christ, the main point was clear. From this first principle he could also prove the vanity of pilgrimages, of prayers to the saints, of confession, and of purgatory. The knowledge of these

\* Opusc. Fr. p. 194, Gen. 1611.

† Luther, who received no aid from works or masses, was comforted by an old priest, who spoke to him of the forgiveness of sins, and proved from the sermons of St. Bernard, that he must believe that God affords us forgiveness through his Son.—*Mathesius*.



errors led him to attack the clergy. He discovered the source of their vices in their riches, in their celibacy, in their convents and monastic vows. Thence it was easy for him to show the utter nothingness of popery, which could support such a system, and by a natural consequence, to overthrow the infallibility of the pope and all mere human authority, and to prove the claims of the Holy Scriptures alone to be received as a rule of faith. What endless difficulties, however, opposed his progress towards complete certainty, may be learnt from his letters written in the year 1530, when his followers drew up the confession of Augsburg. But he read the Scriptures repeatedly through and through, and thereby, he says, became daily more and more convinced. When the path was once opened, the work went more easily forward. Calvin, on the other hand, was so passionately devoted to the truth, that, like Paul, he could not tarry, and he was enabled to comprehend the doctrine of justification through Christ in a few days. His armorial bearings are very characteristic,\* his seal representing a hand holding out a burning heart. It expresses his fundamental principle: "I give thee all! I keep back nothing for myself!" And further, he had not to struggle against the weighty obstacle which Luther's spirit had long since overthrown, namely the scholastic philosophy. Sound heads, and the study of the ancients soon helped him into the right road. He does not complain much of false philosophy; but he exclaims generally against the arrogance of speculators.

It may however be safely affirmed, that Calvin and Luther were not intended by nature for reformers. Both were made such simply by the working of the divine Spirit. The one complains of great shyness and a characteristic weakness; he loved to retire within himself; and Luther was dejected and melancholy. Well therefore may the world wonder that the reformation of the church was carried forward by these agents, the one a weak, and the other a melancholy man!

"As soon," says he,† "as some love for true piety was awakened in me, I glowed with such zeal to proceed, that though I did not entirely neglect my other studies, I pursued them with

\* Vide p. 24 de l'Avertissement des Lettres à Bourgogne sur le Cachet de Calvin. There are two seals; the one used till 1550, the other afterwards. The only difference between them is, that the old seal has a heart in the left hand, and the new has one in the right, presenting it to God, with the letters J. C. The form of the escutcheon is a little different. Luther's seal is much more mystical: it represents a rose in which is a heart, and in that a cross.

† Pref. ad Ps.



little interest; and not a year had passed over, when all those who had any desire for pure learning came to me, inexperienced recruit as I was, to gain information. I was naturally bashful, and loved leisure and privacy: hence I sought the obscurest retirement; but now every solitary place became like a public school."

It has been already shown how generally the German ideas on the subject of church reform were now diffused among all classes of the French people. Beza in his history, and John Crespin\* in his narrative of the martyrs, a work written with christian conscientiousness, relate how many witnesses to the truth at that period afforded proofs of the noblest heroism. Crespin's work deserves particular mention, on account of the general circulation which it subsequently obtained in France, whence it became, in the hands of the protestants, a blessed means of awakening faith, and of exciting, by stirring examples, a more courageous spirit. At that time all believers in the truth were called Lutherans, not Huguenots,† a name introduced at a later period. It happened in the present case, as in all others, that the friends of truth were only so much the more awakened by persecutions, and miracles of the Holy Ghost were again displayed. Death inflicted in the most cruel manner, by torture and fire, became the accustomed path to the crown of life, and was not avoided.

The power of the Spirit gained a speedy and a final victory in the heart of Calvin. He was no longer held back by the plans of his father, and nothing more is recorded of his mother. He was at present in Paris. The evangelical party there held their

\* Jean Crispin, or Crespin, born in Artois, embraced the Reformation, and came to Geneva with Beza to superintend a printing establishment. Beza left it to him alone. He was a learned man; and besides presiding over the printing-office, became a bookseller. The '*Hist. des Martyrs*,' at first in Latin, was afterwards published in French by Goulart, 1570, en 82 nouv. ed. en 10 livres.

† On the origin of the word *Huguenot*, see Pasquier, '*Recherches de la France*,' p. 769, l. 8. Some say that the people so called received the appellation from their defending the house of Valois, descended from *Hugues* Capet. Others say that a young German gentleman having been taken prisoner, being questioned by the cardinal Lorraine, answered in Latin, *Huc nos advenimus*, but stuttered at the first words, *Huc nos*; whence the title of his party. Some refer it to John Huss. Others to the word *Heusquenaux*, seditious people; or the German, *Eidgenoss*. It was first known in France after the faction of Amboise, 1559. Beza says that it sprung from the superstition of the vulgar, who believed that spirits from purgatory perambulated the streets. At Paris it was the '*Moine bourré*;' at Orleans, '*Le Mulet Odet*;' at Blois, '*Le Lougarou*;' at Tours, '*Le Roi Huguet*.' The first discovery of the enterprise of Amboise was made at Tours, and the appellation descended to the reformers.

assemblies in quiet. He felt himself subdued; and, abandoning his former study, gave himself up altogether to the service of the Gospel. This he did, to the great joy of the faithful, among whom was a merchant, Stephen de la Forge, who had done much for the truth, and was subsequently burnt. Calvin praises him in his work against the "Libertines," c. 4. "The memory of the late Stephen de la Forge ought to be blessed among the faithful as that of a holy martyr of Christ."

Calvin preached with great force in the assemblies above alluded to: he concluded every discourse with these words, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" which is sufficient to show the degree of strength to which his faith had arrived. And with what devotion must he have been heard! It was the commencement of his labors; and already did he justify the opinion passed on him by a French writer, a Catholic and contemporary: "Devoted otherwise to his books and his study, he was unweariedly active in everything which concerned the advancement of his sect. We have seen our prisons gorged with poor, mistaken wretches, whom he exhorted without ceasing, consoled or confirmed by letters; nor were messengers wanting, to whom the doors were open, notwithstanding all the diligence exercised by the gaolers. Such were the proceedings by which he commenced, and by which he gained, step by step, a part of our France. Thus it went on, till after a considerable length of time, seeing men's minds disposed to his cause, he wished to proceed more rapidly, and to send us ministers, called 'preachers,' to promulgate his religion in holes and corners, and even in Paris itself, where the fires were lit to consume them."\*

The horrible insensibility with which men raged against the Gospel greatly affected Calvin. He resolved therefore to make an experiment to shame the persecutors, and even the king himself, who was accustomed to look at literary productions with favor. With this intention, he published the two books of Seneca de Clementia, accompanied by a Commentary, in which he freely uttered his sentiments. He was then twenty-three years old; not twenty-four, as Beza says. The dedication is to Claude Hangest, Abbot of St. Eloi (Mommor), and is dated Paris, April 4th, 1532. "Accept this, the first of my fruits. It belongs of right to you; for I owe to you both myself and whatever I have, and, especially, because I was brought up as

\* Pasquier, *Recherches de la France*, l. 8, p. 769.

a child in your house." He modestly states at the beginning, that he ought to seek an excuse for his attempt; "and so much the more, since I am a poor man, and of inferior rank, endowed with only moderate, yea rather with only a very little, learning, and have nothing which ought to awaken even a humble hope of renown. And this feeling of my unworthiness has till now kept me back from giving anything to the public." He here shows a feature of his character, which remained the same to the last, that is, thankfulness. But there is also discoverable a certain degree of confidence that his work was far from being despicable. "I am convinced," he says, "that a really fair critic will accord me not the lowest kind of praise."

But while he came forward, not without some expectation of success, his letters to Daniel exhibit the anxieties of the young author, first appearing before the public.

"Paris, 1532.

"The books of Seneca on Clemency are at last printed, and that at my cost and by my labor. We must now use our best exertions to collect money from all quarters to meet the outlay; and further, to make my calling sure, I would fain entreat you to write to me, and say with what coldness, or with what approbation, the Commentary has been received.\* I have nothing to write to Chemin, seeing that, often as he has been asked, he sends no answer. It is my firm determination not to set out on my journey till he write. And what will it matter, if I seek a lodging for this body of mine under the open heaven for a few days, and lie and freeze? I send you a copy, which you will keep."

"Paris, 22 April.

"At length the die is cast. My Commentaries are published, but at my own cost, and more money has been laid out than you would believe. I must now do what I can to get some of it back. For this purpose I have persuaded certain professors in this city to make the work known. I have induced a friend in the University of Bourges to do this from the chair. You will also be able to help me, and you will do it for the sake of old friendship, especially as you can assist me without prejudice to your reputation, and may even contribute thereby to the public good. If you resolve to confer this kindness upon me, I will send you a hundred copies, or as many as you think fit. In the meanwhile accept this copy, and do not suppose that any obli-

\* MSS. Archiv. Ec. Bernensis.

gation is thereby imposed upon you. I wish to leave you perfectly free. Farewell, and write soon."\*

We see at the end of the 'Life of Seneca,' that he united the two Senecas in this work, father and son, that is, the rhetorician and the philosopher, the tutor of Nero, in one person. He says, for example, reckoning the years of the father and son together, "He died 115 years old." Calvin had the work printed under his name in Latin; and from this period he retained his latinized appellation.

Perilous enough was the publication of this work. Seneca addressed Nero on the subject of clemency, and admonished him respecting the folly and danger of tyranny. To compare the king with Nero; to remind him that the time had arrived when it would be useful for every king to read this lesson; to threaten him by showing how insecurely a tyrant sits upon his throne,—this was Calvin's design; and as it was not allowed him to speak out freely, or in his own person, the publication of an old work was the most judicious method he could adopt. Seneca, moreover, was his favorite writer: his earnest, severe and virtuous mind was the counterpart of his own. He was a Stoic, and he shows in many passages of these books how far the virtuous natural man can go without Christianity: we may refer, among other passages, to the sixth chapter of the first book, in which the heathen philosopher describes the sinful condition of the human race. Calvin, however, accuses Seneca of a want of logical order, which he himself could not endure.

The Commentary is an illustration of the notions and facts contained in the work. We discover, in the vast number of quotations from the old writers, the ardor with which Calvin had pursued his youthful studies. "Not without justice," he observes in the commentary to the first chapter, "has it been said by Plutarch, that it is difficult to give counsel to those who sit in the seat of government. Sovereigns will not believe that it is kingly to live according to the dictates of the understanding; they allow the majesty of the monarch to rejoice in unbridled licentiousness. It is slavish, they say, to submit to another's guidance. Thus they live after their own laws and their own customs, or rather according to their own lust. Even in the case of those who are somewhat more restrained, an inquirer is not willingly suffered; and hence kings and princes generally are

\* MSS. Archiv. Ec. Bernensis.



perpetually subject to an evil which is peculiarly their own, that is, pride."

In the third chapter he says, "By the term *Clementia* Seneca understands the most humane of virtues, that is, benevolence towards all men; philanthropy, the bond of human society." "This virtue is so suited to human nature, that not a man exists altogether destitute of its benevolent influence, or wholly without gentleness; for clemency is true humanity, to be a partaker of which is nothing else than to be a man." To this he adds, that it is also an heroic virtue, without which princes cannot govern, for that the prince can never, even by virtue, win the love of the people, if he fail to employ his power for their true benefit. The king may be distinguished for graces of person, for elegance and cultivation of mind, and for good fortune; but all will lose their value, if he fail, through want of gentleness, to render himself dear and gracious to his people. On the other hand, all his words and actions will be viewed with a friendly feeling, when he has once gained the love of his people by this virtue. No power can be long retained which is administered to the injury of many. The king will pass to and fro like a furious wild beast amid prostrate crowds of men, but in every man he has an enemy. Thence may the wicked better understand his true interest, when, misusing his greatness in order to make many miserable, he arms them all against himself."

Seneca appears, in the fifth chapter, "against unjust anger," to have written especially for the instruction of Francis. In the twenty-sixth Calvin says, "He here shows how dangerous it is for the ruler to resign himself to a cruel and wrathful disposition; first, because there are so many to take revenge; and secondly, because, were he even in perfect security, cruelty is in itself so horrible and detestable, that it is accursed and deserving of the curse. Lastly, he shows how far such a savage feeling ought to be from the soul of a prince. The ruin of others is the ruin of power: that which promotes the welfare of the whole, and of the individual, establishes majesty."

But the labors of Calvin were as fruitless as those of Seneca, and were lost without an echo or a trace in the troubled and noisy sea of passion. In this very year (1532) Francis formed a close alliance with the pope against the emperor. A report also prevailed at this period, that a general council was soon to be held, which would put an end to the present divisions in the church.



A letter from Calvin to Bucer, dated from Noyon in September, 1532, shows that he was already in communion with the reformers of Strasburg, and affords proof of his ardent disposition. He is recommending to Bucer some fugitive, much vilified and accused of being an Anabaptist, and says, "If my prayers, if my tears can avail anything, I beseech you, Bucer, render him help in his necessity. We commit him to you in his poverty; you will, I know, be the friend of the desolate; do not allow him to suffer the extreme of misery."

Calvin soon found occasion to declare himself more openly. Acknowledged as the head of the reformed party in France, his first and greatest object was to reform Paris and the court, and in this manner to produce a new movement, which might be propagated through the whole kingdom. Nicolas Cop, the newly elected rector of the Sorbonne in Paris, was obliged, according to custom, to pronounce an oration on the day on which the Catholics hold the feast of *la Toussaint*. Calvin prepared this speech, to be delivered by the rector on so solemn a day, and before the whole of Paris. He spoke with great freedom on the pure Gospel, and on justification by faith. Cop read it. The Sorbonne and the parliament could not leave so open an attack uncensured.\*

Cop intended at first to appear before the tribunal; but perceiving his danger, he fled to Basel, his native city. Calvin was now sought for. Jean Morin, one of the fiercest of persecutors, went himself to his lodging; but he was not to be found. According to one report, the officers were already at the door, when he was let down by ropes from the window in a basket; and another account states that he escaped in the garb of a vinedresser.† This narrative is not admitted by Beza; but it was popularly received, and has been many times repeated; among others, by P. Masson.

Though Calvin himself escaped, his papers were seized, and many of his friends were thereby exposed to great danger. The reformers, however, sent Calvin to the queen of Navarre, who received him with affection, spoke to the angry monarch, quieted the storm, and lessened the general irritation.

\* Beza (Hist. Eccles. t. i. p. 14) says that Cop pronounced an oration prepared for him by Calvin, and of a character altogether different from the ordinary one. Cop was summoned, and officers were sent to the Collège de Forneret, where Calvin lodged; but the warnings of their friends enabled both to escape.

† Desmay. Drelincourt.

Though the first bold experiment had not succeeded, and the young reformer was obliged to live an unsettled and fugitive life in France, his operations, instead of being suspended, were even rendered the more effective. He scattered the seed of the Gospel on every side. His acquaintance with the queen gave a new impulse to his zeal. On the point of perishing, like Moses, in his cradle, this noble woman delivered him from the danger. Calvin first retired again into Saintonge, where he prepared some short sermons, which were read by the pastors of the district, and served to introduce the people to the knowledge of the truth. The friend who induced him to undertake this work, and who afterwards fled with him into Switzerland, was Louis Tillet (brother of Jean Tillet, register of the parliament of Paris, and of Tillet bishop of Meaux), but who is not named by Beza. He knew him at a later period, when Calvin travelled to Geneva, and drew him out of his concealment. We soon after find him at Nerac, the residence of queen Margaret of Navarre. Here too he met, for the first time, the tutor of the king's children, Lefevre d'Etaples, who, fleeing from the persecution of the Sorbonne, found protection with the queen of Navarre. This venerable old man saw with a penetrating glance the force of Calvin's spirit, and foretold his future greatness.\*

Calvin remained some little time in Angoulême. Traces† of his residence there long existed in the country; a vineyard was known as Calvin's vineyard 150 years after his death. He lived with Louis Tillet, and employed this anxious period in his own improvement. It must have been now that he prepared the first sketch of the 'Institutions.'‡ In 1533 he boldly ventured to return to Paris, where the persecution was still raging violently, conducted thither, as it would have seemed, by the providence of God, for the prevention of a great evil which still however burdens and troubles the reformed church.

Servetus,§ who was hereafter to encounter Calvin in such gloomy circumstances, had already begun to diffuse his errors.

\* Such a prophecy was delivered concerning Luther. As he lay sick (Mathesius, p. 2), an old priest foretold that he would not die, but become a great man.

† Drelincourt, p. 40.

‡ Some say that he composed the greater part of his 'Institutions' at Clair, in the house of Louis du Tillet.—*Bayle*.

§ In the year 1531, Servetus, who also called himself Reves, a physician from Aragon, published seven little books at Basel, 'De Trinitatis Erroribus,' and which were translated into Dutch, 1620. The printer of this translation was put to death. Ecolampadius disputed with Servetus in 1530, but in vain.

He was now in the country, and appointed the day and hour for a meeting with Calvin, whose reputation was so rapidly increasing. Calvin willingly agreed to the conference, perilous as it was for him to come forth at this time, when he was singled out by the persecutors, and was known as an open censurer of the king. But how easily might a friendly conversation have united these two men in the bonds of amity,—have led the Spaniard, still young, into the right path, or at least have preserved Calvin, through the influence of personal knowledge, from yielding to an unmeasured abhorrence of his doctrines! Servetus however did not appear, and from this hour he hastened towards the consummation of his dark fate. Beza speaks of him, as "that unhappy monster, who, having agreed to dispute, dare not appear;" and another says, that "he could not endure to look the lion in the face;" an assertion not to be depended on, for the young Servetus was remarkable for his courage. "I reminded Servetus, in the prison,"\* says Calvin, "shortly preceding his death, that sixteen years before, not without danger to my earthly life, I offered to deliver him from his errors; and it would not have been my fault, had he manifested repentance, if all pious men had not given him their hand." From Paris Servetus went to Orleans, where the Franciscan monks were then carrying on their infamous tricks with pretended spectres and miracles.

The fury of the storm which raged against the evangelical party increased every day, and Calvin resolved to leave his native country. He found opportunity however to publish at Orleans his work against the notion of the soul's sleep, entitled '*Psychopannychia*,' 1534.

It was a season of great calamity to the church. While Francis was carrying on the work of persecution in his kingdom, as we shall relate hereafter, affairs were not improved in England, where Henry VIII. had already assumed the title of head of the church, and was now, in 1534, solemnly acknowledged such by parliament. How Calvin opposed himself to this proceeding we learn from a passage in Thuanus.† There is one also in his Commentary on the prophet Amos, vii. 13, in which he thus speaks: "They who so greatly exalted king Henry at the begin-

\* Joh. C. Refutatio Errorum Serveti. Ed. Amst. t. viii. p. 511. Calvin is suspected of having fallen into an error respecting the date of the invitation alluded to.

† J. A. Thuanus. Hist. sui temporis, l. i. p. 16. "Alicubi Calvinus, qui abrogatam Pontificis in Anglia potestatem non ægre ferebat, sibi acriter animum pupugisse testatus est, quod se Henricus caput ecclesiæ appellaret."

ning were certainly a very inconsiderate people. They gave him thereby unlimited power over all ; and I have been always deeply distressed at this, since there were flatterers who did not hesitate to call him the highest authority in the church, under Christ. This was going too far."

The Anabaptists were now agitating Germany, and were spreading into France ; but in the year 1535 the city of Munster was taken, and the sect dispersed. The League of Smalcalde was also renewed for the protection of the church, and Charles undertook his prosperous crusade against Barbarossa in Tunis. Calvin hastened from Paris and Orleans to Basel, where he, immediately after the 'Psychopannychia,' probably at the beginning of August, prepared for publication the first edition of the 'Institutions.'

On this journey he and his friend Tillet were robbed by their servant in the neighborhood of Metz, and it was only through the assistance of another that they were enabled, stripped of everything, to make their way to Strasburg.

A new life was now opened to Calvin. He became personally known to the German reformers ; they did not look upon him as a stranger ; he was one with them, and his solidity and conscientiousness found an echo in the German character. At Basel, Calvin met for the first time the learned Simon Grynaeus,\* who, both as a theologian and philologist, gave lectures on the Holy Scriptures, and, with still greater success, on the old classic writers. He also formed an intimacy with Wolfgang Capito, who had already laid the foundation of reform at Basel. Under his guidance he now devoted himself with ardor to the study of Hebrew.

A curious anecdote is related of these times, but which cannot without some question be admitted into history. The Catholic Flor. de Raimond writes, that Tillet hastened after his brother, led him back to France, and left Calvin in Germany, where, with Ruffus (Roux), he saw Bucer, and the others who troubled the consciences of the people. Bucer, it is said, took him to Erasmus. That eminent man conversed a long time with him ; and after entering into his reasonings, turned to Beza, and, pointing at him, said, "I see there a great plague in the church, ready to break out against the church."

\* He lodged, at the Diet of Worms, in 1540, with Melancthon and Calvin, and died 1541. His relative, Joh. Jac. Grynaeus, was also professor at Basel in 1575.



In opposition to this account, we may remark, that the journey of Ruffus into Germany was made at the beginning of the Reformation, about the year 1523. Sturmius writes: "Capito and Bucer had both such a call at the beginning, that Jacob Faber and Gerhard Ruffus secretly journeyed from France in order to hear them. They were sent by the queen of Navarre."\* A second journey of Ruffus must therefore be supposed, but for this history affords no foundation. At the time of the first journey Calvin was in Paris.†

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE WORK ON THE SOUL'S SLEEP, ENTITLED 'PSYCHOPANNYCHIA.'—THE ANABAPTISTS.

IN the natural development of the powers of the age which we are describing, the sudden exaltation of the human spirit was almost unavoidably connected with some unhealthy circumstances. Thus, as Luther had to contend with the fanaticism of the peasants, with Carlstadt, and with the Anabaptists, so was it in Calvin's case. The fanatics, when their fire was gone out in Germany, removed to other lands. In France they pretended to cultivate a simple Christianity, and became a great hindrance to the Reformers. They not only made it easy for the subtle enemies of the truth to substitute wild heresies for the genuine substance of the Gospel, but by their half-intelligible, fantastic, imitative notions, which it was not easy for every one to refute, they disturbed that new oneness of doctrine which was happily about to be established. Calvin, who was compelled to wage constant warfare with this sect, published a work in 1544, in which he appealed to first principles, and confuted both the Anabaptists themselves and the spiritual libertines, a wretched, pantheistical offshoot from the same party.

The fundamental error of the Anabaptists, it is rightly observed by Mc'Crie,‡ sprung from their vain imagination of a certain ideal spirituality and perfection, by which they supposed the Christian church to be really separated from the Jewish, which they persisted in considering as a mere carnal, temporal and

\* Antipappus, iv. p. 1, p. 8.

† Barckhusen, *Historische Nachricht über Calvin*, p. 24.

‡ *Life of Knox*. Plank, pp. 268—272.



visible society. Through this notion they were tempted greatly to abridge both the rule of faith and the rule of action, which Christianity imposes on its disciples. They confined themselves almost entirely to the New Testament, and at the same time contended against the lawfulness of infant baptism, of temporal governments, and national churches; against that of oaths, of war, and self-defence. Besides exhibiting these peculiarities, most of the Anabaptists of this period were infected with the poison of the Arian and Pelagian heresies, and rejected, in common with the papists, all the principles set forth by the reformers on the subject of grace and predestination.

It was against these fanatics that Calvin directed, in the first instance, his work on the 'Sleep of the Soul.' In the preface he says, "that the doctrine of the soul's sleep is not new; for we read that it was first propounded by certain Arabians, who said that the soul dies as well as the body, and that both will reawake at the day of judgment. At a later period John, bishop of Rome, maintained the same opinion, but was constrained by the sorbonists of Paris to retract it."

One cannot but admire the fulness of thought, the force of reasoning, and the originality which mark this as well as the later writings of the author. Still more striking is the matured faith out of which the argument springs, and the only foundation of which is the holy Scriptures. But there is a good deal of bitterness in his attacks on those who uphold the contrary opinion: he employs the force of his irony against them, and calls them sleepers and dreamers, because they defended the notion of our sleeping after death. He afterwards felt that he had been guilty of undue severity, and in another preface, written ten years after the former, he says, "I perceive that some things have been said a little too sharply, and that they may perhaps wound delicate ears. But as I know that there are good people who have allowed this notion of the soul's sleeping to enter their minds, I should wish to prevent their being offended with me."

The Anabaptists, however, were very far from being sensible of his earnestness. He had already given ample proof of his firm and unflinching resolution. "I have deliberated so much about attacking them, that if they resist they shall find me a constant defender of the truth; and though I may not be sufficiently learned, yet dare I boldly promise this, that, by the grace of God, they shall find me invincible." How he judged himself may be seen by the following: "I have never directed my indig-

nation against them except modestly; I have always shown myself distrustful of violent and cutting words, and have almost uniformly so tempered my style, that it has been better calculated to teach than to force assent, and to attract those who would not willingly be led."

Calvin's subject is very interesting, but it is only intelligible from the standing-point afforded by the belief of the church. He proves his opinion simply from the exposition of certain passages of Scripture, that the soul lives, works, and develops itself after death; and that the rest in the grave can only be called eternal peace, which even now progressively casts light upon the spirit. The argument of those who err on the subject consists in this: they adduce passages from Scripture which seem to support the notion of the sleep of the soul, and Calvin opposed them victoriously with the same weapons.

There still remain, however, many questions to be answered, and which have more or less employed every awakened Christian mind. As, for example, whether that close bond which unites man to nature, and the sleep which returns by natural necessity after the labor of the day, do not indicate that there will be a rest after death, if even only for a short duration? Whether there be not in the present mortal body a germ, out of which the new, finer, and more spiritual organization may develop itself? And whether this new development may not be the resurrection of the flesh which we are instructed to believe, and which may be the key to the mystery? Bonnet, in the 'Palingenesia,' speaks of a germ which has its seat in the brain: Origen makes mention of a first principle of the body. In this, his language is different from that of Leibnitz, who speaks only, in general, of the indestructible monads of the bodily part of men and animals. But he represents his monads as actually distinct; and recognizes the real and the eternal in the individual, in opposition to the theory of Spinoza.

These ideas, as well as the fear which precedes the death of the individual, and the struggle for distinct, personal existence, are not clearly expressed, and seemed to have exercised but little influence on the mind. Other questions are connected with the same subject. As, in what relation does our resurrection stand to that of our Lord? Whether man, without sin, was not capable of a resurrection or a change, like that which took place in our Lord, when his human organization was snatched from human observation? And, again, how we are to understand the

orthodox system, according to the words and in the sense of St. Paul, when the substance of the body is dispersed in the elements? These questions are left untouched by Calvin, and he thus states his reasons for not answering them:—"I know what a charm there is in novelty for some ears; but we ought to remember, that there is but one Word of life, which proceeds from the mouth of the Lord." As they err who attribute novelty to the word of God, when it re-appears in its own pure splendor, so on the other hand do they sin who allow themselves to be shaken like a reed by every wind which blows. "Is this to learn Jesus Christ, when without the Word of God we lend our ears to every kind of doctrine, even though it be true? If we once receive doctrine as it comes from man, shall we not soon also swallow lies with like facility? For what has man of his own except vanity? Let us show ourselves obedient disciples of the Lord; such as he wishes us to be, that is, humble, poor, pretending to no wisdom of our own, full of zeal to learn, knowing nothing,—not seeking to know anything except that which he shall teach us; and, still more, avoiding as deadly poison everything which is foreign or opposed to his doctrine. I would repress the foolish curiosity of those who discuss questions which in reality produce only torment of mind."

Having stated the question in dispute, and defined the soul and the spirit, the order and the method being thus already shown,\* he proves by many passages that the soul, which by nature is distinct from the body, continues to live on; and that Christ and Stephen in their last words did not refer to the life which vanishes, but to the spirit which endures. So Peter also shows that he believed the dead to have a spirit, since he says that Christ preached to the spirits, that is, to believers, forgiveness,—to the unbelieving, punishment. The holy fathers were in darkness or in prison, and now only saw the dawning of the day. Christ, in spirit, preached to these spirits; that is, the power of redemption was made known to the spirits of the dead. "Let us now," he proceeds, speak of the history of the rich man and Lazarus, who after the sufferings of this life was carried into Abraham's bosom, but the rich man into hell. Are these dreams and fables? But to escape the force of this argument, our antag-

\* The soul is spiritual, because it is the spirit which is after the image of God. Christ confuted the Sadducees, who acknowledged no spirit. The primitive church believed the resurrection, and Polycarp died saying that he should that day stand in the spirit before God. Melito wrote on this subject.

onists answer, this was only a parable. I beg them however to adduce a single example from Scripture where a man is mentioned by his proper name in a parable. What do these words signify? 'There was a man whose name was Lazarus.' The Word of God must be a lie, or this is a true relation. The fathers of the church treat it as such. Now let them go and sell their empty nut-shells in the open day; they will always fall into the same snare. And even were it a parable, it is still a similitude in which truth is embodied; and if these great theologians know it not already, let them go and learn from their grammar that a parable signifies a similitude, borrowed from the real world.\*

"We would now say somewhat respecting the peace of pious souls separated from the body. Holy Scripture, by 'Abraham's bosom,' intends us to understand nothing more than the state of rest. In the first place, then, we call *rest* that which those masterly theologians call *sleep*; and by *rest* we understand, not a state of stupor, torpidity, or drunkenness, as they do, but a state of conscious, happy security and trust, which faith indeed already in some degree bestows upon us, but which cannot be perfected till after death. Here upon earth the life of the pious is a conflict, because, not yet free from sin, their only hope is in God's mercy, and their spirit is still vexed with anxiety. But when they have altogether cast off the flesh, and the power of its allurements, which like domestic enemies so disturb their tranquillity, then will they enjoy peace and live with God. St. John speaks clearly: 'Blessed are they who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labor.' This, therefore, is Abraham's bosom,—peace, and Abraham's rest, and slumber,—in so far as that word is not perverted by the unclean mouth of these sleepers. For what greater joy can the conscience feel, in what can it more securely rest, than in that peace which opens to it the treasure of heavenly grace, and makes the soul drunken with the sweetness of the cup of the Lord? But you, sir sleeper! when you hear the word 'drunken,' think you not of your headaches, and your senseless dreamings, and heavy carnal sleep? That is, of all the evils which arise from drunkenness? for according to your gross, dull mind, so must you understand it. But they whom God has taught understand by this expression *rest*,—the rest of the conscience, which the Lord bestows upon his people in the house of peace."

\* Op. C. Ed. Amst. 1667, t. viii. p. 340.



From this he proceeds to show that our soul is immortal, because Christ is not holden by death, but is arisen. We are his members, and we must sever the members from the body, if we would deprive them of life. Here he pours forth the whole fulness of his Christian feeling, the strength of his faith, which will know nothing whatever of the doubts of the understanding, and speaks in the same language of assurance as in the latest of his writings. "Christ," says he, "has life in himself, as a stream eternally flowing from the Father, in whom is his life; a fulness of life, with which he quickens his people. Although he was dead, and body and soul were separated, yet did the soul remain living in God. But if Christ be our life, they who contend that our life is terminated by the death of the body, must first tear Christ from the right hand of God, and consign him to a second death, or they cannot shake our faith. Christ, that gracious Lord, watched for you and your salvation, but you will sleep in your darkness, and not hear the watcher in the night. If we could comprehend, by true belief, what is meant by the kingdom of God, which is now in us, it would also be easy for us to understand the eternal life already begun in us." But the whole is too excellent to admit of extract.

Some passages on eternal life, and illustrative of the different sentiments of spleenish controversialists, follow the above. "This is what we believe; but those sleepers will continue to sleep on, till the sound of the trumpet awake them, and terrify them as a thief in the night. This life in Christ is blessed, joyous, and not a sleep. Mention is often made in holy Scripture of martyrs who live after death. Christ, moreover, says to the thief crucified with him, 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise;' and this 'to-day' does not refer to the distant period of the resurrection. Let us then hold fast this belief, which is built upon the foundation of prophecy, upon the truth of the Gospel, and upon Christ himself; namely, that the spirit is the image of God, and therefore has inward strength, intelligence, and eternity. Even while it is in this body it gives evidence of its powers. When it leaves its prison-house, it hastens to God, and enjoys his presence in the hope of a happy resurrection. This rest is its paradise. The spirit of the damned, on the contrary, over which hangs the terrible judgment of God, is filled with horror at looking for that which is to come, and which the Apostle describes as so *fearful*. To wish to know more, is to inquire into the deep mysteries of God; whereas it



is enough for us to know what the holy Spirit, a sufficiently good instructor, has been willing to teach us. He says, 'Hear me, and your soul shall live,' Isai. lv. 3. And how beautiful is the following in comparison with their inventions! 'The souls of the righteous are in the hand of the Lord, and the terror of death shall not harm them. Fools think they die, but their souls are in peace.' Wisdom, iii. 1."

Having proved the immortality of the soul, the objections of opponents are next answered.

"We will now examine the materials and the swaddling-clothes with which these reasoners envelop their slumbering souls, and the opiates which they give them to produce sleep." To the argument of disbelievers, that the immortality of the soul was lost by sin, he replies: This is false: the death of the soul is something altogether different. Those who are sanctified die, but their death is only a transit to eternal happiness." To the objection that death is continually named in Scripture as a sleep, he answers, that "sleep is a metaphorical expression, as may be proved by many instances. Thus a churchyard is called a *cemetery*,—a resting-place indeed of bodies, but not of souls. From this time to the day of judgment the powers of the soul will suffer no torpor."

Calvin rightly suppose that there is a future state of happiness, which shall continue till the resurrection, when the kingdom of God shall receive us forever. He adduces Tertullian, Irenæus, Chrysostom, Augustin, and Jerome, all of whom speak of dwelling-places, *receptacula*, where the souls of the righteous will remain till they receive the crown of righteousness at the day of judgment.

"Christ is our life." This was so firmly rooted in his soul, that it was become his own second life; and on this point he would not allow his opponents the advantage of a single doubt.\*

\* This little work, says Dr. Paul Henry, might prove useful if translated, with the omission, on the one hand, of some harsh and polemical expressions, and some additions, on the other, from the second work against the Anabaptists, in which the subject is more fully developed.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CALVIN ENDEAVORS TO CONVERT FRANCIS I.—PERSECUTION IN FRANCE.—CALVIN'S INSTITUTES.

WHILE Calvin was employed in confuting the notion of the soul's sleep, a far greater design took possession of his thoughts,—the conversion, that is, of the king. As Luther once stood opposed to the emperor Charles, for the defence of the Gospel, so now would Calvin for that of his fellow-believers oppose himself to the king of France. This prince enjoys a fame far above his deserts. He patronized the sciences and protected men of learning, and they in return crowned him with honor. The world also willingly accords praise to the weak in their struggles with the powerful, and Charles V. found the king of France the only obstacle to his uninterrupted course.

But in church history, where the holy Spirit and not the political world, passes sentence, the worldly, prudent, and ambitious sinner wears but a sorry look. What does it help him to shine forth by his acts or by his station, as the mirror of knighthood in his kingdom, or to have been for France what Leo was for Italy? By his obstinate and unconquerable hatred to pure doctrine, and by his fanatical zeal, he inflicted upon the church and upon his country immeasurable disgrace. He who had time to visit the workshops of artists, could not spare an hour to examine the faith of the reformed. Beza, who seems to have admired his outward gifts, says indeed, "This king was not like those who succeeded him. He was an excellent judge of affairs, and was endowed with no slight powers of understanding to distinguish the true from the false. He was a protector of the learned, and was not personally opposed to us. But the sins of the French people, and the king's own sins, already threatened by the wrath of God, would not suffer him to hear us, or to read our writings."\* An historian,† on the other hand, who gives an interesting sketch of his life and character, and contrasts him with

\* Hist. Eccles. p. 15. He seems mistaken as to the date of Melancthon's letter. That reformer was invited after the persecution. The queen of Navarre, and two brothers of the house of Belley, had won him so far that he deliberated about inviting Melancthon; but in 1534, this was all ruined by the indiscreet zeal of some who printed certain articles written in a very rude and violent style.

† Robertson.

the emperor Charles, shows clearly how the latter excelled him in force of mind, and even in moderation, and expresses his conviction that the seeming willingness of the king to make himself acquainted with the reformed doctrine was only a political mask.

In order to recover his credit as a good catholic, which had been somewhat shaken by his league with the heretical king of England, by his reception of an ambassador from Soliman, and by his war with Charles, who defended the old religion, he desired to exhibit in some conspicuous manner his adherence to the catholic church. The unseasonable zeal of his subjects, who had posted even on the walls of his palace at Blois certain manifestos, with indecent satires against the mass and religion, afforded him an occasion for this movement. At the time when Farel was preaching the truth at Geneva, such preachers as Girard Roux, Cauraud and Berthaud, of the Augustine order, appeared in Paris. As Satan, according to the expression of Crespin, would not suffer this, he aroused many of the sorbonnists, enemies of the light, to prohibit them from proclaiming the Gospel. They now accordingly changed their preaching into private instruction; but this also was forbidden by the sorbonnists. Girard was arrested, and Cauraud was confined to the house of the bishop.

The oppressed Christians had now no better course to pursue than to send to Savoy, in order to obtain from thence a short abstract of doctrine which might be given to the people, and compensate for the want of free oral instruction. This design was executed by one Feret, servant to the apothecary of king Francis. At Neufchatel he caused copies of the articles of faith to be prepared in the form of manifestos against the mass and the pope: they were written in a pointed style, and were intended for distribution in the streets.\* But although this strong diatribe against the mass contains nothing more than the truth, yet is the unchristian tone of the language very offensive, and both Cauraud and other moderate men were greatly displeased with its character. But, alas! fiery zeal prevailed. The police was now busily employed in executing the king's wishes. Especially was the blood-thirsty Morin distinguished in this work: none equalled him in the fearful art of inventing new tortures: all the city trembled before him.

On the 29th of January 1535, the king ordered a so-called

\* Farel it is suspected, according to Crespin, was the author of the manifestos which were called 'The Placards' at Paris.—*L. des M.* p. 111.

illustration to be solemnized in Paris. In this ceremony the image of St. Genevève, the patron saint of Paris, was carried round the city. It was only in the greatest necessity that this was done. Beza thus describes the scene: "The king himself appeared in the procession; and walked on foot, and with his head uncovered, accompanied by his three children,\* through the city. They all carried white tapers; and during the procession six men were burnt alive, in the most barbarous manner, in the chief place of the city, and at which the people were excited to such madness that the executioners could scarcely keep them from being torn to pieces. What is more, the king having dined in the great hall of the bishop's palace, where the whole court of parliament was assembled, clad in scarlet robes, and with them a great part of the clergy, the chief nobility, and the ambassadors of several nations, he there protested before all, with great indignation, that if he knew even one of the members of his own body to be infected with the heretical doctrine, he would cast it from him. But if his rage was great, the constancy of the sufferers was much greater."

A brief account of the martyrs of that period will not be misplaced here.

Bartholomew Milo, a shoemaker of Paris, was a cripple in all his members except his tongue and his arms. He possessed many natural gifts, which he had misused in his youth, when his mind, peculiarly sarcastic, had been directed against religion. The severe sickness which had made him a cripple was the means whereby the Lord restored him to spiritual strength. A pious man, who had been converted to the Gospel, being mocked by him as he passed his shop, gave him a New Testament to read. He was immediately so affected by its contents, that he ceased neither day nor night to read it to his family. His friends, who often came to his house to hear him play on musical instruments, which he practised with great skill, could not sufficiently wonder at this conversion. During his confinement, for six years, to a bed of sickness, he became mature in faith. Such was his bodily helplessness at this time, that it required four persons to remove him from one place to another. But he still retained his habits of industry; and occupied himself sometimes in teaching children to write, at others as a goldsmith, or in engraving steel instruments, as knives and swords, in which work he was very skilful. What he earned was given to the poor who knew the truth. His chamber was a school in which the



Gospel was made known, and out of which the honor and majesty of the Lord shone brightly forth. He had already been taken into custody. The rage of Morin now knew no bounds: it fell upon Milo first, and as he approached the cripple he cried, in his blind fury, "Get up, Milo!" "Ah, sir," replied the latter calmly, "it would require the power of a greater Master than you are to make me stand upright." He was immediately dragged away, and condemned to be burnt by a slow fire on the Place de Grève. His courage and patience afforded his fellow-prisoners unspeakable comfort and increased resolution. Being led past his father's house, he bore himself in a manner which inspired even the enemies of the truth with admiration. Thus did this servant and witness of Jesus Christ exhibit the same patience in death with which he had honored God in his life.

Nicolas Valeton, a receiver, no sooner saw Morin at a distance approaching his dwelling, than, guessing his design, he directed his wife to remove his books from their cases. Filled with terror, she immediately put them into a secret place. Morin arrived and led him off to prison, but could learn nothing from him respecting the empty bookcases. He therefore went to the wife, bewildered her with tortuous questions, assured her that her husband had already confessed the existence of the books, affirmed with an oath that the affair would not be attended with any evil consequences to him, and receiving a small sum of money from the poor, inexperienced woman, endeavored to make her feel perfectly secure. Thus deceived, the unfortunate wife readily told whatever she knew. The books were brought out; and although they did not belong to any forbidden class, Morin so represented the matter to the king that the man was condemned to death, simply because he had put the books out of sight, and had thereby discovered, it was said, his heretical disposition. Valeton was led to the Croix du Tirouer and there burnt alive with wood brought from his own house. He died with a degree of firmness, which was viewed with so much the more wonder, because he had only been a short time instructed in the Gospel.

John du Bourg, a merchant of Paris, also manifested what a deep, living knowledge he had obtained of divine truth. No regard for relations, no thought of riches, no earthly bond, could move him to deny the faith. His house stood at the entrance of the Rue St. Denis, where he had a cloth warehouse. He was burnt at Paris in the Place les Halles.



Henri Poille, a poor bricklayer, gave a similar proof in his martyrdom of the power of a lively faith. He was indebted for his first acquaintance with the holy Scriptures to Briçonnet, bishop of Meaux. His persecutors feared that even at the stake his edifying discourse might work upon the feelings of the spectators; they therefore bored his tongue through, and fastened it with an iron pin to his cheek. It was very common at this time to place a heavy piece of wood on the mouths of confessors, to prevent them from convincing the bystanders, by their spiritual addresses, of the purity of their Christian belief.

Stephen de la Forge, of Tournay, a rich and benevolent merchant, had printed at his own expense great numbers of the Bible for general circulation. He also sealed his profession by dying in the flames in the churchyard of St. John.

Such were Calvin's hearers when he preached the Gospel in Paris: such was the church which, consisting of witnesses of the truth, his preaching had awakened.

But all this was only a slight prelude to a long series of horrible distresses. Throughout the reigns of Francis I. and his immediate successors, up to that of Henry IV., the most barbarous murders were perpetrated without ceasing;—a feast, it was said, given to the honor of God to turn away his wrath.\* In our quiet times it is difficult to understand how one rational being could thus rage against another, without attributing the whole to the active spirit of Satan. Was the letter then which the king wrote to Melancthon in June 1535 a mere piece of hypocrisy? or, as is often the case with such minds, did devotion to the world, political interests, contempt for honesty, blend themselves in this instance with a strange desire to examine the truth? But this wretched creature, leagued as he was with papal treachery, which he exercised against Charles, who, confiding in the honor of his knighthood, trusted him, and for that trust deserves our regard far more than the betrayer, shows too plainly that he knew not what real honor is. So precious a virtue cannot exist without truth and fidelity; and Francis had neither right nor reason to justify his exclaiming at Pavia, "All is lost but hon-

\* Hist. des Martyrs, p. 105. To appease, they said, the anger of God; but it was rather to consecrate to him these good souls as a sweet-smelling sacrifice. (Beza, Hist. Eccles. t. i. p. 23.) The persecutions were continued during the whole reign of Francis, and by all the parliaments, whatever they pretended to the Germans. It would be difficult to recite the cruelties perpetrated, for the processes were burnt with the sufferers, and the tongues of many were cut out to prevent their making any statement, or giving an account of their affairs.

or!" More correctly might he have said with Henry VIII., "All is lost : even conscience."

Let us turn now to Calvin, who opposed himself to this man, and seemed called by God to open his eyes to the truth. It was a decisive moment in the history of the kingdom of God. Had the king, to whom all were looking, been converted, the nation would have been converted, and the conversion of France would have given a new character to this portion of history, and brought numberless souls to an earlier acquaintance with divine truth. But what a contrast between the two men ! The one a zealous servant of the Lord ; the other a politic child of the world. Calvin a deep-thinking theologian, who had cast aside the errors of the old church ; Francis a passionate Catholic : Calvin resigning himself altogether to faith and holiness, and cultivating the strictest purity of manners ; Francis covetous of honor, but thoughtless ; an egoistical and luxurious monarch : Calvin a sound scholar, working only for the kingdom of God ; Francis ambitious of fame, and seeking it by splendid deeds of arms. The two exhibit the extremes of the French character.

In the celebrated dedication with which Calvin sent his 'Institutes' to the king, he comes forth with firmness and dignity. He summoned the whole strength of his mind to this work ; and here, in this decisive moment, the peculiar character of Calvin, so distinct from that of Luther in similar circumstances, is remarkably exhibited. The latter, though so much warned against it, travels to Worms, and presents himself before the emperor with these words : "I can do no otherwise, so God help me, Amen!" Calvin, on the contrary, fled from his country and his king, and then appeared with the work, which, for its excellence and spiritual worth, will be regarded by the Christian church, to the end of time, as one of its choicest treasures.

The somewhat lengthy preface to this work may be viewed in the light of a formal apology for the evangelical party :—

"Most mighty and renowned monarch ! When I began the composition of this treatise, I entertained no thought of laying it before your majesty. My object was to exhibit the simplest elements of Christianity, and thus to lead those who had already some love for the Gospel to the knowledge of its principles. I labored especially for my fellow-countrymen the French, knowing that many among them hunger and thirst after righteousness, while few only have attained to even a moderate degree of knowledge. Hence the unpretending character of the book. When, however, I saw that certain cruel persecutors possessed such

power in your kingdom, that no place of refuge for true doctrine existed any longer, it seemed to me that I should be accomplishing a useful design could I at the same time, and by the same means, both instruct them and make you acquainted with the nature of our belief; that you might thence learn the real character of that doctrine against which those madmen rage with such fury, and carry fire and sword through your kingdom. I therefore hesitate not to state, that this work contains the sum of that doctrine which they so blasphemously proclaim ought to be visited with imprisonment, banishment, outlawry, yea, with fire, and that it ought to be exterminated from the earth. I know well with what clamors they besiege you, in order to render our proceedings hateful in your eyes; but you will graciously bear in mind that innocence either in word or deed, would cease to be known if men gave heed to accusers only. Should it be said, for the purpose of exciting your hatred, that the opinions which I defend have been already universally condemned, and that sentence has been passed upon them at the tribunal of justice; this will only show that they have been put down by the violence and power of the opposite party, and have been pursued by all the arts of falsehood and treachery. That force has been used, what stronger proof is needed than this, that sanguinary sentences have been passed against us without our being heard? That fraud has been employed, what other proof is needed than the fact, that without even the show of justice, we have been accused of violence and rebellion?

"That we complain not without cause you can yourself testify, most noble king! You know how falsely and slanderously our doctrine has been daily represented to you. According to the report of our enemies, we aim at nothing but to deprive kings of their sceptres, to overthrow the seat of judgment, to confound all ranks and distinctions of society, to destroy the peace and quiet of the people, to abolish all laws, to annihilate the rights of property, to effect, in short, the ruin of all. And this is the least of the injuries which they inflict. Frightful are the accusations against us which they spread among the people; they charge us with crimes, which, were they rightly attributed to us, would deserve at the hands of mankind at large a thousand deaths by the cross or the flames. Who can wonder that the people hate us with a deadly hatred, when such horrible accusations obtain belief? Hence all classes are united in condemning our doctrine. Inflamed by these feelings, judges pronounce a sentence, already determined upon, but certainly not accord-

ing to righteousness, and believe that they have done their duty, if none of our brethren, dragged before the tribunal, fail to be convicted either by their own forced confession, or by the false testimony of others. But what is their crime? It is this: they have listened to the condemned doctrine. But with what right has it been condemned? This is the main point of our defence. We dare not repudiate this doctrine; we must proclaim its truth; but we are not permitted even to open our mouth on the question.

"Hence, illustrious monarch! I ask only that which is just, when I beseech you to examine our cause yourself,—a cause hitherto treated without order, without justice, without moderation, or rather, only with unmeasured hatred. Do not suppose that I am pleading for myself, or that I am only seeking permission to return to my country. I am strongly impressed indeed with the natural love of my native land, but in the present affliction I would rather shun it. It is not my own interests, but the things of Christ, the claim of all righteous men, which I now defend. It is these which, at the present time, and in your kingdom, are trampled under foot, and are almost utterly ruined without your will or knowledge, through the tyranny of pharisaic hypocrites. Why it is so I need not repeat, but the calamities still exist. To such lengths has the persecution gone, that the truth of Christ, if not altogether dissipated and destroyed, is, as it were, put to shame and buried. The wretched church is sinking under the frightful punishments inflicted upon it; it is crippled by exile, bowed to the earth by threats; none dare open their mouth in its defence; and still are our enemies striving with undiminished fury to pull down this half-destroyed edifice. No champion arises to resist these furies. When any one appears more than usually affected by the truth, they pretend that the errors and imprudence of simple men must be overlooked. Thus speak these modest catholics, calling that error and imprudence which they know to be the most certain truth of God; and those foolish to whose minds Christ has not disdained to reveal the mysteries of celestial wisdom; thus, all are put to shame for the Gospel. Let it be your praise then, illustrious king! not to shut your ears or your heart to so righteous a cause, the more especially since it involves the defence of God's glory upon earth, the exaltation of divine truth, and the firm establishment of the kingdom of Christ. Such a cause is worthy of your hearing, worthy of your consideration, worthy of



your tribunal. It is the conviction that he is the vicegerent of God which makes a true king. He is not a king, but a tyrant and a robber, who does not seek to promote the glory of his God. Miserably is he deceived who hopes to establish the prosperity of an empire which is not governed by the sceptre, that is, by the word of the Lord. Never will that prophecy be found to fail in which it is said, 'Where there is no vision, the people perish.'\*

"Nor ought any contempt for our low estate to divert you from this investigation. We know well how poor, how wretched we are. In the sight of God we are miserable sinners; in that of men we are utterly despised. We are as the dregs and off-scourings of the earth, or whatsoever else can be named as vile; so that if we would glory before God, we have nothing left but his mercy, through which, by no merit of our own, we have been called to the hope of eternal life. Among men, we are known only by our infirmities, to confess which is in their eyes the greatest shame. But far above all the glory of the world, and unconquered by its might, stands the doctrine which we profess. For it is not ours. It is the truth of the living God and of his Christ;—his, whom the Father appointed King, that he might rule from the one sea to the other, and from the river to the uttermost bounds of the earth: or, as the prophets speak concerning the magnificence of his kingdom, that he might subdue the nations, breaking them with a rod of iron; dashing them in pieces like a potter's vessel; smiting the earth with the rod of his lips, and casting down the great image of iron and clay, of brass, silver and gold."†

"But our adversaries here stand forth, and declare that we falsify that Word of God to which we wickedly appeal. That this however is a devilish slander, and an inconceivably disgraceful falsehood, you will yourself discover on a careful perusal of this summary of our doctrine. I will therefore only note such things as may serve to direct your attention to the argument, and facilitate your inquiry."

This portion of the preface is followed by a parallel between the spirit of the evangelical and that of the papal church, in which sensuality† is spoken of as the governing principle of the Romish clergy of that period. Calvin would have been more correct, perhaps, had he ascribed more weight to their ambition

\* Proverbs xxix. 18.

† Quia illis Deus venter, culina religio.

† Dan. ii. 34; Is. xi. 4; Ps. ii. 9.

and love of power. A degree of bitterness also is discoverable, which, however justified by the truth, was not calculated to change the temper of the king.\* There was wanting that Christian spirit of benevolence and gentleness which can alone subdue resistance and lead to love, and awaken Christian sympathy.

Calvin proceeds to cite the six principal objections of his opponents. They were—1. That the doctrine was new and unsafe: of this we need say nothing. 2. That it was established by no miraculous proof, whereas the papacy was founded from the first in miracles. He here shows, that miracles are allowed for the confirmation of the truth, and not as its foundation; that the truth of a doctrine must be perceived in the soul, as Christ indicates (John vii. 18, viii. 50), showing that a true doctrine is that which seeks the honor of God, and not that of men. Miracles, therefore, establish the truth to the glory of God, and not error. The Romish miracles are false, satanic, being invented to turn the christian from the service of the true God, and to give him over to a blasphemous, or at least a vain and ridiculous superstition.

The point to which the third error spoken of refers, namely that the fathers of the church favored and defended the papacy, is of such importance, even in the present day, that we think it right to give literally what Calvin says on the subject:—

“They bring the fathers of the church against us, as if they were the champions of their godless error. But if the controversy is to be determined by their authority, the victory, and I speak with caution, will doubtless be on our side. Moreover, although much which is noble and edifying may be found in the fathers, it has happened to them as to men in general, that they have occasionally fallen into error. But these their pious sons, endowed as they are with so much skill and judgment, adore nothing more than their imperfections and errors; and that which they have said best they despise, belie, or pervert, so that they seem to be anxious only to gather what is base from among the gold. Hence they load us with abuse, as if we were the enemies or despisers of the church-fathers. So little however is this the case, that were it proper, we could now prove by the testimony of the fathers themselves what we

\* It is worthy of remark that Calvin does not especially mention the idolatrous worship of the Virgin Mary. This point was not so severely handled by the reformers as it seems necessary to treat it in the present day.

mainly desire to establish. But we so read their writings as always to keep in view the saying of Paul (1 Cor. ii. 21-23), that all things are ours, to serve us, that is, and not to rule over us; while we ourselves belong to the Lord, whom, without exception, we must all obey. He who forgets this distinction will not stand fast in the faith. And further, these holy men are doubtful on many points, and frequently at variance with each other. Not without cause, say our opponents, are we instructed by Solomon, not to remove the ancient landmarks which our fathers have set (Prov. xxii. 28). But to mark out the boundary of fields, and to trace the limits of the domains of faith, are different things; for when a man is concerned with faith, he must leave his people and his father's house. If however they are so passionately fond of allegorizing, why do they not rather follow the apostles? To overstep the bounds which they have traced, is manifestly a greater crime than to neglect any of the other church-fathers. It is thus that Jerome, whose words they have received into their canons, speaks; and if they will not allow us to trespass beyond the limits set by the fathers, how is it that they themselves venture to do so whenever it can benefit their cause? It is one of the fathers of the church who says,\* 'that God neither eats nor drinks, and that he has no need of cups and platters.' Another says,† 'that the sacraments and holy rites of Christians require not gold; for that that which is not bought with gold cannot be rendered acceptable by gold.' Thus when they adorn themselves in the services of religion with gold, silver, ivory, precious stones and silken garments, and believe that they cannot seek God acceptably unless they be thus decorated with unheard-of pomp and senseless luxury, they pass the defined boundaries. It was a father of the church‡ who said, 'that he freely ate flesh on days when others abstained, because he was a Christian.' Thus again they pass the line when they pursue with anathemas those who taste flesh during the forty days of Lent. It was a church-father who said, 'that a monk§ who will not work with his hands may be compared to a robber or a thief.' And Augustine says, in his book on Monks, c. 17, 'that it is not lawful for monks to live at the expense of others, even though they should give themselves up entirely to contemplation, prayer and study.' But this line assuredly have they passed, when they have pampered the foul and swollen bellies

\* Acatius.

† Ambrosius.

‡ Spiridon.

§ Trip. Hist.

of their monks in harlots' houses, and fattened them at the expense of others. It is a church-father\* who says, 'that it is a horrible thing to set up an image of Christ, or of a saint, in a Christian temple.' And this is not the saying of an individual merely; it is the statement of a council,† 'that the object of our worship should not be what may be fixed to the wall.' Far indeed have they departed from this rule, for they have not left a corner in their churches free from images. Another father‡ expresses his wish, 'that when we have performed the last offices for the dead, we should leave them to rest quietly in their graves.' But this boundary they also overstep, for they would engage us perpetually about the souls of the dead. It was one of the fathers§ who testified, 'that the substance of the bread and wine remain unchanged in the Lord's supper, as the substance and nature of man in Christ are united with the divine.' They therefore set at naught all limitations, when they assert, that the substance of the bread and wine ceases to exist as soon as the words of the Lord are repeated, and that the bread and wine are then changed into his body and blood. There were also church-fathers|| who said, 'that as there is but one Eucharist in the universal church, from any approach to which the base and wicked are prohibited, so ought all those to be severely reprov'd who, being present, refuse to partake of the ordinance.' But have they not overstepped these boundaries by filling not only their churches, but their houses with masses, to be seen by all, but more especially by those who can afford to pay the most, however impure and unholy they may be? They invite no one to faith in Christ and to true communion with the Lord, but offer their own work for sale instead of the grace and merits of Christ. There were church-fathers,¶ of whom one commanded, 'that the man should be altogether denied communion who was contented to receive it in part, that is, by the bread or the wine separately;' and the other of whom contended, with great force and severity, 'that the blood of the Lord ought to be refused to no one who was ready to shed his own blood as a confessor of the Gospel.' These lines have they passed, in establishing a law which justifies the very thing which the one father would visit with excommunication, and which the other condemns by the clearest deductions

\* Epiphanius.

† Ambrosius.

|| Chrysostom. Calixtus Papa.

† Concil. Eliber. c. 36.

§ Gelasius Papa.

¶ Gelasius. Cyprian.



of reason. It is a church-father\* who has said, 'that it is a presumption deserving punishment, for any one in a doubtful matter to speak confidently, on the one side or the other, without being able to refer to the clear and undoubted testimony of Scripture.' But this limit have they manifestly passed, by creating so many constitutions and church laws, so many magisterial directions, without the support of one word of Scripture. It is a church-father† who accuses Montanus of having introduced, among other heresies, the observation of fasts imposed by the law. Here too they have passed the boundary, for they have established fasts by rules of the strictest kind. A father of the church‡ has decided that the ministers of religion ought not to be denied the right of entering into the marriage state; and he describes that state as a pure and holy state; nor are there wanting other fathers to confirm his testimony. But this limit have they destroyed by absolutely denying to the clergy the right of marrying. It was a father§ who said, that there is one Christ for us, of whom it is written, 'Him shall ye hear;' and that we must not consider what others have said or done, but only what Christ, the head of all, has commanded. This is a line, however, which they would draw neither for themselves nor others, for they desire any teacher rather than Christ, both for themselves and for the world. It is a church-father|| who asserts, 'that the church must never set itself above Christ, for his judgment is always right; whereas the judges of the church, being men only, continually err.' This limit again have they utterly despised, by presumptuously affirming, that the authority of holy Scripture itself depends on the judgment of the church.

"All the fathers have with one voice and one heart proclaimed their abhorrence of those who allow themselves to corrupt and darken the pure Word of God with sophistical and dialectic subtleties; but do they not pass this limit, when they employ the whole of their lives in fomenting strife, and are continually seeking to pervert the simplicity of Scripture, and to veil its meaning by their sophistical arguments? If the fathers could rise from their graves and listen to these disputes, dignified by the name of theological speculations, they would not believe that they had any reference to God. But I should say far too much, were I to continue to prove with what rashness these

\* Augustine.  
§ Cyprian.

† Apol. de quo Ecclesiast. Hist.  
|| Augustin. cont. Crescon.

‡ Paphnutius.

people shake off the yoke of the fathers, while they pretend to be their dutiful and faithful sons. Their boldness however is so infamous and deplorable, that they presume to punish us, because we will not venture to set aside the ancient landmarks."

The fourth accusation against the reformed church, namely that it forsook the old customs, Calvin answers out of Scripture, and shows, that the old customs ought to be followed when they are useful and tend to promote the honor of God, but that all unprofitable practices should be regarded as a pest.

The fifth accusation was, that the reformed had no visible church, for that the church was always visible, and there was no other visible church but that of Rome.

To this Calvin replies: "In the first place, we contend that the church may exist independently of an outward form, and that the form consists, not in that visible splendor which they so much admire, but altogether in other signs; that is, in the pure preaching of the Word of God, and in the right administration of the sacraments. On the contrary, they are filled with terror when they cannot point to the church with the finger. But how often was the church so disfigured among the Jews, that it could scarcely be recognized! Where was its visible splendor at the time when Elias complained, 'I, even I only, am left?' And since the coming of Christ, how frequently has it not been without any visible form! obscured and oppressed sometimes by wars and rebellions, and at others by heresies.

"Will it be said that in such times no church existed? But Elias said further, that 'God had reserved to himself seven thousand, who had not bowed the knee to Baal.' And we doubt not that Christ has continued to preserve his kingdom upon earth ever since his ascension into heaven. But if his disciples always required for their encouragement the contemplation of an outward form, they must soon have lost all courage. Hilarius, even in his time, regarded it as a great sin, that, bewildered by a foolish admiration of the episcopal dignity, men could not see the poisonous serpent which lay hidden under that mask. These are his words:—'I warn you against this thing. Take care of Antichrist! A senseless love for the mere walls of the church deceives you: you absurdly honor the church of God in splendid architecture. In this and other such things you vainly seek the peace of God. Can we fail to see that here Antichrist will sooner or later place his throne? Mountains, woods, seas, prisons

\* Hilarius contra Auxentium.

and wildernesses are to me far safer retreats. In such places dwelt the prophets: thither driven, they prophesied. Why should the world admire the mitred bishops of the present day, unless it supposed them to be conspicuous for their holiness as teachers of religion, and therefore worthy of presiding over great cities? Far from us to be so foolish a species of veneration,' &c.

"I will now, however, briefly show how dangerous it is to test the existence of the church by its outward form. The chief bishop, it is said, who occupies the apostolic chair, and the bishops who, consecrated and anointed by him, bear the holy mitre and the pastoral staff, represent the church, and must be regarded as the church. Thence it follows that they cannot err. But why not? Because they are the consecrated shepherds of the church and of God. And were not Aaron and the other chiefs of the Jewish nation consecrated to God? But Aaron and his sons, already devoted to the priesthood, erred when they framed the golden calf. And why could not the church, according to this reasoning, be represented by the four hundred prophets which deceived Ahab? Yet the church was then represented by Micaiah only, who, alone and despised, singly upheld the truth. Were not those prophets, so far as name and outward relations are concerned, the church, who so fiercely oppressed Jeremiah, and who declared, 'The law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet?' And yet against this host of prophets was Jeremiah sent alone to proclaim, in the name of God, that the law should perish from the priest, counsel from the wise, and the word from the prophet.

"And did not that assembly shine forth in outward splendor and grandeur which was called together by the chief priests, the scribes and the pharisees, to take counsel against the Lord? Go then and content yourselves with this outward mask, and proclaim Christ and all the prophets of God schismatics, and the servants of Satan instruments of the Holy Ghost. If they would speak sincerely, and according to the teaching of their own hearts, they would fairly and truly tell me in what land, and among what people, they believe the church to exist, since a decree of the council of Basel deposed Eugenius from the papal throne, and elevated Amadeus of Savoy in his stead. Even to save themselves they could not deny that this council, so far as concerned the outward form, was fair and valid; and yet it was established, not by one, but by two popes. In that council, Eugenius,

with the whole body of cardinals who labored with him to dissolve the assembly, were condemned as schismatics, and as obstinate opposers of the judicial summons. But subsequently, by the help of the temporal princes, Eugenius established himself on the papal throne. The choice of Amadeus, on the other hand, confirmed as it had formally been by the approbation and authority of a holy and general synod, passed away in smoke, and he was obliged to content himself with the cardinal's hat, which was given him as a piece of bread is thrown to a hungry dog.

"Out of the bosom of these rebellious and pertinacious heretics sprung the whole line of subsequent popes, cardinals, bishops, abbots and priests. Here they are caught. Upon which side is the church? Will they deny that the assembly referred to was a general council? No sign of outward dignity was wanting. It was summoned by two bulls; graced by the presence of the papal legate, who conducted the proceedings and occupied the chief place; it was rendered venerable by all external ceremonies, and retained to the last its character of authority and sacredness.

"Will they now pretend that Eugenius, with his whole troop, was a schismatic, although they have all received their consecration from him? If so, they must either allow us to form an altogether different view of the Christian church, or we will proclaim them all schismatics, seeing that of their own consent and accord they have been ordained by heretics.

"And if the past will not suffice to prove that the church is not necessarily a visible power, they may themselves serve us for an argument, seeing they have so long proudly and openly assumed the fair and lofty title of shepherds of the church, when in reality they are to it like a deadly disease. I will here say nothing of their manners, or of the many wicked and tragical acts which have disfigured their whole course. They allow themselves to be pharisees who must be heard, but not imitated. But their doctrine, that very doctrine through which alone, according to their own statement, they constitute the church, will appear to you, O king, as altogether a soul-murdering system, as a fire-brand, the ruin and destruction of the church, if you will expend but a brief portion of your time in the perusal of this work."

We proceed with our extracts from this defence, it being often asserted in our own day against the reformers, and that by protestants as well as Romanists, that they were inspired by a spirit of insubordination. Let Calvin answer, and show that we have



nothing to fear from without, if the appeal be made to truth and justice.

"They object to us in the last place, most grossly and unfairly, the numerous strifes, tumults and disturbances which have followed the preaching of our doctrine, and the fruit which it bears in many particular instances. Thus they unjustly attribute to the doctrine that which ought only to be ascribed to the malice of the devil. It is the nature and the destiny of the divine Word never to operate without exciting the watchfulness and activity of Satan ; but this is the truest and the safest sign by which to distinguish it from that which is false. Human inventions are ever easily diffused ; they ever meet with willing ears, and are received by the world with grateful approbation. For the rest, who can doubt the wickedness of attributing to the Word of God the hatred which belongs to sedition, faction, schism and heresy ? But this is no new thing. Elias even was asked whether he was not the disturber of Israel. Christ himself, in the eyes of the Jews, was guilty of sedition. The Apostles were accused of creating a tumult. And thus it is that they act who charge us with all the disturbances which are excited against us.

"But Elias has taught us how to answer these accusations. It is not we who create the errors and vexations complained of, but they who resist the power of God. This consideration, that the Apostles themselves suffered the same things as we endure, ought to humble the pride of the persecutors, and to help the weakness of those who are exposed to such afflictions. There were, at the first, ignorant and foolish people, who, to their shame, despised the writings of St. Paul, though dictated by the spirit of truth. There were mockers of God in those days, who, when they heard that sin abounding, grace is still more abundant, exclaimed, 'Well then, let us continue in sin, that grace may the more abound;' who, when they heard that Christians had no longer the law for a schoolmaster, foolishly said, 'Then we will sin; for we are no more under the law, but under grace.' Thus there were those who regarded Paul as favoring sin. False apostles found their way in, and sought to disturb the churches which he had planted. Many preached the Gospel with a wicked, strife-loving mind; not in purity of spirit, but with a desire to add affliction to his bonds. In other places the Gospel made little progress; every one sought his own, and not that which was the Lord's. Some went creeping on, as dogs looking for what they may discover, or as swine ready again to

wallow in the mire. The greater number made spiritual freedom an excuse for passing their lives in wild, unbounded licentiousness. Many false brethren crept in unawares. Even among the believers themselves there was much strife and envy. What could the apostles do? How were they to conduct themselves? Were they to determine to conceal the truth for a time; to forsake the Gospel, which had thus become a nursery for so many contentions, a cause of such numberless abuses, the source of such various disorders? On the contrary, in those seasons of anxiety they were strengthened by the recollection that Christ was a stone of stumbling and of offence, set for the falling and rising again of many; for a sign which should be spoken against. Supported by this assurance, they pressed forwards with Christian boldness, patiently enduring every kind of distress, danger, and affliction.

“And this same conviction shall also support us, knowing, as St. Paul testifies, that the Gospel will ever be a savor of death to those who perish, but a savor of life eternal, the power of God unto salvation, for the righteous. And this should we experience in ourselves, if we did not, through our unthankfulness, annul the wonderful mercy of God, and convert that to our destruction which was intended for our salvation.

“But again I turn to you, O king! Again I adjure you not to let those groundless slanders, by which our enemies would terrify you, disturb your mind. Heed them not when they say that we are only seeking by this new Gospel, as they call it, an occasion to excite sedition, and impunity for every kind of vice. Our God is not the author of strife, but of peace; and the Son of God is not the advocate of sin. He came to destroy the works of the devil; and we are accused of offences, of our being guilty of which we have never given cause for the slightest suspicion. Is it credible, indeed, that we who have never uttered a single seditious expression, should be meditating the overthrow of states? that we should do such things, whose course of life was so peaceful and simple, in the sight of all, while we lived under your Majesty's protection; and who even now, though banished from our homes, cease not to pray God to crown both you and your kingdom with prosperity and joy? Is it probable that we should madly desire to obtain impunity for every kind of wickedness,—we in whose character there may be much to blame, but who certainly do not merit so bitter a reproach?

"Nor have we, aided by the grace of God, so little prospered in the ways of the Gospel, as not to be able to answer these slanderers by asserting that our lives have afforded examples of chastity, kindness, and mercy; of moderation, patience, discretion, and other virtues. Plainly and openly may it be seen, our general conduct shows it, that we fear and worship God sincerely, and in our hearts. Our only desire is, that his name may be hallowed both by our life and by our death. Our enemies themselves have been often constrained to bear witness to the innocence and blamelessness of our character as citizens, even while they were punishing that with death which was deserving of the highest praise.

"But if there be those who, with a pretended zeal for the Gospel, excite seditions and practise violence, hitherto unknown in your kingdom; or if others, to conceal their licentious vices, assert, as an excuse, the liberty of grace,—and instances of such I know there are,—let it be remembered, there are laws and punishments by which they may be legally and properly constrained. But let not the Gospel of God be blasphemed on account of the wickedness of evil men! I have sufficiently declared the infamous injustice of our slanderers. You are no longer without defence against their machinations. I only fear that I may have said too much, my preface having increased to an apology. It was not however my object to make a defence, but to soften and incline your heart duly to consider our claims. It has been alienated from us, nay inflamed against us; but we trust to recover your favor, if you will deign patiently and without prejudice to read this our confession, which we would also lay before your Majesty as our defence. But if the whispers of malicious men so occupy your ears, that no place can be allowed to the answers of the accused, and those importunate furies continue, with your consent, to threaten us with bonds and scourges, with the rack, with fire and sword, then must we yield ourselves up, as sheep appointed to the slaughter, but still so as to possess our souls in patience, and to rest in hope upon the strong arm of our God, who, without all doubt, will appear in his own good time, and will stretch out his hand for the deliverance of the poor in their affliction, and will exercise vengeance on the blasphemers who now rejoice in their vain confidence of safety. May the Lord of Hosts, illustrious king, establish your throne in righteousness, and your power with equity!"—Basel, August 1, 1535.

The mind of the king remained immovable, like that of Charles when appealed to by Luther, and as when, at a later period, the admirable Confession drawn up by Melancthon was read to him at Augsburg. Beza supposes that Francis never looked at the work; this however is not credible, considering the respect which he entertained for the queen of Navarre. But his irritable disposition made him regard Calvin's freedom of speech as a crime.\* Thus the precious time of visitation passed away, and France knew not that which made for its peace; even as it was with Jerusalem in those days when the Lord wept over it. And so too might we weep over blinded France, looking not forward to those days of trouble which it has prepared for itself, and which may so properly be regarded as the consequence of its rejection of the Gospel.

Soon after the reign of Francis I. the power and character of the two terrible parties were developed, which in their conflict with each other rent the land in twain. Then followed the frightful regency of Catharine of Medicis, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the long fanatical war of the evangelical party against the league and Spain. Providence indeed once again offered that peace to France which truth only can afford; all obstacles to its reception were removed; a protestant king was called to the throne; Henry IV. arrived in Paris. But ignorance of human nature, and the political caution of Sully, whose faithful heart nothing could separate from the interests of the king, yet who viewed religion as consisting rather in universal benevolence than in belief in Christ, as is seen in his history of the king's conversion, were the main causes why France allowed this blessed moment to pass by unemployed. Henry did not obtain his end, the reconciliation, that is, of the two parties by mutual love and forbearance.† He lived in constant anxiety,

\* "Quam si forte legisset—magnum esset meretrici Babylonicæ jam tum vulnus illatum." V. C.

† Brantome reports that one day, when the king was speaking on the subject, he allowed the observation to escape him, that this novelty tended to the overthrow of the monarchy, both human and divine. In fact, this prince exhibited an irreconcilable hatred against the protestants, inherited too plainly by his successors. The lesson remained to them. This opinion is derived from the insinuations of ecclesiastics. This king, says the president Henault, an. 1534, complaining of the pope to the nuncio, warned him of the example of Henry VIII. The nuncio replied, "Indeed, sire, you would be the first to suffer harm. When the people have a new religion, the next thing they wish is a new prince." Francis should have answered that neither Henry VIII. nor Gustavus Vasa, nor any of the Saxon princes, was dethroned because he embraced the reformed doctrine. Villiers, Essai, p. 140.



treated by both parties as a heretic.\* Mistrust and hatred were the only fruits of his benevolence; and at last the spirit of evil rewarded his departure from the truth by assassination, and that by the hand of the party to which he had gone over. Had his life been prolonged, and had Sully's noble plan been brought to perfection, to accomplish which the army stood prepared, for humbling, that is, the catholic party, and the house of Austria in Germany, the thirty years' war, with all its miseries, would probably have been avoided.

After the death of Henry, the anger of God against France was again seen in the oppression of the Gospel, under the wretched Richelieu, who beheld with delight the thirty years of suffering endured by Germany. Nor was it less visible under the government of Louis XIV., who, in his old age, becoming a tool of the fanatical papists, revoked the edict of Nantes, drove the best of his subjects, those most distinguished for their faith and morals, out of the country; gave occasion to the Camisard war, and nationalized all those abuses which a free evangelical spirit would have extirpated. Through his fanatical, despotic, voluptuous disposition, he corrupted the morals of the people, and prepared the way for the terrors of the revolution, the effects of which are still felt.

But we now approach another portion of the era marked by the visitation of the Lord, who will not refuse to teach his people the things which concern their peace, hitherto hidden from their eyes. Equal rights are now accorded to the members of both religious parties, and the door is open to the Gospel. If the love of truth, if clear notions and experience have not yet enlightened the inward eye of the mass of the people, still that spirit of darkness which ruled in former times no longer prevails; another power will soon commence its reign. Protestants foretell the conversion of the nations; and truth, in the end, will satisfy their long thirst after freedom.

\* Henry became a catholic, and indeed with the consent of Beza, who, after the death of Calvin, who never would have given his assent, was the head of the reformed party, their patriarch and oracle. He regarded this step as necessary. He sought to promote, at the same time, the best interests of the kingdom and the salvation of the king. The attention of Sully, with whom he corresponded, was by his wish especially directed to this matter. The documents on the subject are preserved at Gotha. —Schlosser, L. B. p. 272.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE FIRST EDITION OF CALVIN'S 'INSTITUTES.'

THE 'Institutes,' sent to the king of France with the preface spoken of above, and written against the Anabaptists then very active in that country, exhibit the faith of Calvin as he then held it, and as he continued to hold it through the whole of his life. It is generally allowed that there are few books to be compared with this, whether we examine its doctrine or its method, the clearness of its arguments, or the correctness of its style.\* A learned Hungarian, Paulus Thurius, said, in a Latin distich,† that nothing equal to it had appeared since the days of the Apostles. But this refers only to the first sketch of the work, which, lost probably in the storm of persecution, the Sorbonne having issued an especial order for its being burnt, is now one of the rarest of books. Calvin thus speaks on the subject in his Latin preface to the Psalms :—

When I was living obscure and unknown at Basel, and when many pious men had been burned in France, and their execution had inspired the Germans with deep hatred and indignation, efforts were diligently made to quiet the feelings thus excited. For this purpose, false and wicked pamphlets were circulated, and in these it was asserted that the Anabaptists only, men of unquiet spirit, whose fanaticism threatened to destroy all social order as well as religion, had been the sufferers. When I saw that this was a mere court artifice, invented to conceal the shedding of the innocent blood of holy martyrs by the lying pretence that they who suffered were utterly despicable; and when I saw that, if this were not contradicted, the persecutors would continue to rage and massacre unchecked, I knew that my silence, or my not opposing myself with all my strength to their fury, would be treason to the cause of righteousness. This was the occasion which led to the publica-

\* Especially in the last and complete edition.

†

"Præter apostolicas post Christi tempora chartas,  
Huic peperere libro sæcula nulla parem."

tion of the 'Institutes.' My first object was to free my brethren, whose death is precious in the sight of God, from a shameful slander; my next was, as many more of our unhappy people were threatened with similar cruelties, to excite at least some feeling of pity and compassion for their sufferings in other nations. I did not however at that time produce the large and laborious work which is now before the public, but a mere sketch of the design. How far I was from seeking fame by the attempt, is sufficiently evident from the circumstance, that I again left Basel, and that without its even being known from whose pen the work proceeded. It was also my intention still to keep the matter a secret."

Our next inquiry is, in what year this first edition appeared. According to Beza, it was published in 1535, when Calvin was living at Basel. The edition of 1535 has however never been seen, that of 1536 being the earliest actually known. Gerdes remarks indeed that the printers of that time were probably in the habit of putting on the title-page, not the date of the year in which the book was printed, but that of the following year. The edition however of 1536 could not be the first; for in this Calvin, as he states, did not allow his name to appear, whereas in that of 1536 he speaks of himself by name. According to Gerdes a copy of the latter edition existed in Brunswick, and another in Geneva, but in the Geneva copy the first forty-two pages were wanting. It is not now to be found at Geneva, but perfect copies may be seen at Zurich and Bern. It seems that the first edition was quickly sold; so at least we may gather from a letter addressed to Calvin by Samarthanus, professor in an academy at Poictu. The letter, which is written in the language of ardent admiration, is dated April, 1537, and contains the following passage: "I am distressed above measure, that while we have been deprived of you, we are also denied the advantage of possessing that other Calvin who might have discoursed to us,—I mean the 'Institutes.' I envy Germany the enjoyment of a privilege which we cannot yet procure." Bayle also believes that the edition published at Basel *per Thomam Platterum et Balthasarem Latium* was not the first, and confutes Moreri, who speaks of an edition of the year 1531.

According to these facts, I am inclined to believe that a first edition existed in 1535; the occurrence which gave rise to the work having taken place at the end of the year 1534, and the persecution commencing at the beginning of 1535. It would

have been absurd to delay the publication a whole year; nor is it conceivable that Calvin, impatient as he was, would do so. The materials of the book had been in part prepared; it was written with great rapidity, and the only portion of it which exhibits signs of labor is the address to Francis. We may suppose then that the months of February, March, and April, were diligently employed in the composition of the work; it might pass through the press in the three following, and be published in August. But the point to be next noticed is decisive. The edition sent me from Zurich is in every respect the same as that described by Gerdes and Turretin. Calvin names himself three times in this edition, and at the end are the words *Mense Martio anno 1536.\** The dedication to Francis, which formed the introduction, belongs to the first edition, which probably appeared in August, 1535. It was impossible that he could be ready with the Latin work before us, not concluded till the end of January, in the month of March, 1535. Add to this, that even if Francis and his sister Margaret understood Latin, the practical mind of Calvin would never have allowed him to send a book written in Latin to the French court; and since it was his intention to write most of his works in both languages, it is not probable that he would write his first only in Latin. His little essay on the Sleep of the Soul, and that on the Lord's Supper, were originally written in French. We may therefore suppose that there was a first edition of the 'Institutes' in that language, in which his name was not inserted. At the beginning of the year 1536, he translated the work into Latin for circulation in Italy, where it could be but little read while in French, and this translation was printed *Mense Martio*. I have even found in a French edition of the 'Institutes' of 1566 the preface to the king, in Calvin's old style, with the subscription, *Basle, le premier d'Août, 1535*, so that this epistle must necessarily be of the date here set down. In the old Latin edition of 1561, published in Calvin's lifetime, a copy of which I have now before me, the date appended to the letter is 1536; the later French edition has 1535, and the later Latin, 1536. The day of the month is variously given. That which Gerdes says, respecting the date on the title-page being that of the year following the one in which the work was printed, is altogether untenable. Otherwise the same must have been the case with the

\* This does not agree with the *Epistola Nuncupatoria* addressed to Francis, which bears the date 10 Cal. Sept. (23 August) without that of the year.



other works of Calvin, but it is not so. The French edition is lost, and the Latin now before us is the translation, which appeared in 1536, and in which he names himself three times, and therefore could not be the first. In a letter addressed to Daniel, October 13, 1536, he mentions that he was daily expecting the appearance of the French edition of his writings, which he wished to send him with the letter. It clearly appears from this that the 'Institutes' existed in French, Daniel having already received the earlier works. In the revised edition prepared at Strasburg he assumed the appellation of 'Alcuin,' as a species of anagram, in order that the work might not be rejected in Roman catholic countries on account of his hated name.\*

Let us look now at the contents of the work. The first chapter is on the Law, and the author begins with describing the perfections of God and the wretchedness of fallen man. In the last edition, the knowledge of God and of ourselves forms the main subject of the introductory chapter, and many thoughts and expressions are found, not existing in the earlier editions.

The misery of the first man, says Calvin, was not confined to himself: it has descended to us all, and is inborn. He expresses himself piously and eloquently on this subject, and observes: "If a man exhibits in a shining exterior an appearance of piety and holiness, this is but hypocrisy, and is hateful before God, for the feelings of his heart are still base and corrupt."

His doctrinal principle is thus briefly described:—"Although we are so born that we can do nothing which is pleasing to God, yet we do not on that account cease to be responsible for the duties which we cannot fulfil. It is not permitted us to

\* The edition, a copy of which is preserved in the library at Zurich, has the following title:—"Christianæ religionis institutio, totam ferè pietatis summam, et quicquid est in doctrina salutis cognitu necessarium, complectens: omnibus pietatis studiosis lectu dignissimum opus, ac recens editum.

"Præfatio ad Christianissimum Regem Franciæ, qua hic ei liber pro confessione fidei offertur.

"Joanne Calvino,  
Nouiodunensi autore.\*

Basileæ,  
MDXXXVI."

At the end, "Basileæ, per Thomam Platterum et Balthasarem Lasium (not Latium) mense Martio, Anno 1536." It is a small octavo volume of 514 pages, and six pages for the index. After the index is a figure of Minerva, with the inscription,—"*Tu nihil invita facies dicesve Minerva.*" There is no flaming sword at the beginning of the work.

\* Calvin names himself twice at the beginning of the preface, and a third time in the superscription of the first chapter.

plead as an excuse that we want the ability to obey, for it is our guilt and our sin which hold us in bondage, and render us incapable of doing or willing that which is good. But God is a righteous judge, and we are all therefore subject to his wrath, and to the punishment of everlasting death, not a man existing who either can or will fulfil his duty, in whatever it may consist.

"This sentiment is the origin of the doctrine of grace. Man has liberty in respect to good, but only in a limited degree. The anger of God rests upon us, and we feel that he is righteous, unable as we are to perform that which is good. We are, of our own free will, fallen with the first man; and grace alone, the renovation which is from God, can help us. Man, according to Scripture, is a child of wrath; we have plunged ourselves into a state of death and condemnation, and have nothing in us but weakness, corruption, death and hell. That man may know this, God has set forth the law. This teaches nothing different from the conscience; but, because man is too blind to look inwardly upon himself, God has given him a written law. As we cannot however properly fulfil this law, we must seek some other way of salvation. This is *the forgiveness of sins*. When, accordingly, we are humble and penitent, God shows himself merciful towards us. And this saving grace we receive through Christ Jesus our Lord, who being one with the Father, and God himself, took our nature upon him. He has brought into the world the fulness of all heavenly blessings, that he may make us abound therewith. Such are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, renewed by which we are freed from the power and bonds of the devil, are graciously accepted as the children of God, and are prepared and sanctified for every good work. Through the operation of this blessed Spirit, the wicked passions and the lusts of the flesh, which still exist in us while we are in this mortal body, now die in us; through his power we are renewed day by day, that we may enjoy a new existence, and live unto righteousness."

How true and complete his conversion was may be seen from the following passage :—"All these good things come to us from Jesus Christ our Lord. To him we owe the free forgiveness of sins, peace, reconciliation with God, the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit. When we comprehend all this with the assurance of faith, reposing confidently on the divine goodness, and not doubting but that the Word of God which promises

these things is itself power and truth,—when, moreover, we enter into communion with Christ,—then we become possessed in him of all those treasures and gifts of the Holy Ghost which lead to life and salvation. To this we can only attain through a living and true faith, knowing that he is our sole good, that we are nothing without him, but that in him we are children of God and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. On the other hand, those unhappy people who have no part in Christ, be they what they may, or do whatever they can, are hastening forward to shame and destruction, to the judgment of everlasting death, rejected by God and shut out from the hope of salvation. And since we cannot of ourselves attain unto the knowledge of our poverty and misery, or acquire faith from any exercise of our own ability, we must pray God to lead us by true repentance unto knowledge, and by faith to the experience of his compassion, and of the sweetness of his mercy in Christ Jesus, who, as the only way to the Father, can bring us to eternal happiness."

The last passage shows how closely the doctrine of election was connected in his mind with that of conversion by grace.

A short exposition of the Ten Commandments follows the section from which we have quoted the above. Calvin restores the old division of the commandments, that which was followed in the primitive church. He speaks, in the first place, against the error of uniting the first and second commandments in one, a usage introduced for the purpose of giving less force to the prohibition against graven images, and which rendered it necessary to divide the second commandment into two parts. This was done, but not generally approved of, even in the time of Augustine, who however excused it on the frivolous excuse that in the threefold division there was a shadowing out of the mystery of the Trinity. Independent of this, the old and legitimate arrangement pleased him better. I have little doubt that all this was effected through the artifice of Satan, that the souls of men might gradually lose sight of the commandment which so distinctly forbids the worship of images.

"The whole law tends to prove this, that we should love God and our neighbor. It is not of ourselves that it speaks: we are already sufficiently inclined to self-love. The law is spiritual, and is intended to improve the inner man. Hence Christ has given new and sublimer commandments, directed to the sanctifying of the inner being, thereby provoking the enmity of

those who pretend that they are too onerous and difficult. Grace does not destroy the law. All men sin, and the curse rests upon all, and desperation follows. The law can do no otherwise than judge the sinner, and condemn him before God, that God only may be justified, and that all flesh may be silent in his presence."

This is followed by a confutation of the Roman catholic error, that a man may partly fulfil the law, and partly atone for his sins, by satisfaction and works of supererogation,—an error which agrees inconceivably well with our fallen nature. The author here adduces the awful description of man's wickedness, in which it is said that there is nothing good in him from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. It is our sin to be always seeking to excuse our unworthiness, and to convert the gifts of grace into a cause of self-congratulation. But God's righteousness alone is perfect: our own righteousness is iniquity, our integrity is pollution, our glory is ignominy.

This exact knowledge of the unworthiness of man, in reference to the divine law, furnishes another fundamental principle of his theological system.

All the works of men are stained with sin. Even one wicked work is sufficient to render us guilty in the sight of God. Hence under the law we are not to consider the work, but the commandment; for if righteousness comes by the law, it is not this or that good work which justifies us, but a constant obedience, which is impossible. God cannot be reconciled to man as a sinner and an enemy: but we are his enemies so long as we are sinners; our sins therefore must be forgiven before God will look favorably upon any work of ours, and hence the forgiveness of sins must come from grace.

Man accordingly must be freed from the law, not in a carnal way, but in that spiritual sense which again raises the depressed conscience. We arrive at this through faith in God's mercy in Christ. It is not once only, but throughout our lives, that God grants us this forgiveness.

He especially refers to St. Paul, where he shows, that if the promise is of the law, "faith is made void, and the promise of none effect."\* This promise will be fulfilled in those only who believe that it must be fulfilled in them, that is, in those who have faith. A firm belief therefore is followed by a sure promise of salvation, which God will certainly fulfil in the case of

\* Rom. iv. 14.



the faithful, our whole hope being originally founded in the unfathomable depths of mercy.

Here again we discover the characteristic effort, to give all to God, and to reduce man to nothingness. We can never sufficiently trust in God, unless we altogether distrust ourselves; we can never properly raise our minds to the contemplation of his perfections, unless we first understand our own debasement; we shall never find consolation in him, unless we first despair of finding it in ourselves. We are justified through Christ; his righteousness, which is one and perfect, and which alone can stand in the sight of God, is reckoned unto us as if it were our own.

The use of the law is threefold:—1. It exhibits God's righteousness, and convinces us of sin. 2. It shows how God punishes and threatens the offender with death and judgment.\* 3. It continually admonishes those in whom the spirit of God is, and shows them what is right. The law is necessary to the indolent; it is to the flesh as a whip to the slow and lazy ass. Justification is unattainable through good works, not because good works may not exist, but because we must not place our trust in them. Our confidence is, that Christ was given for us.

Our author inquires further into the nature of this trust. Paul declares that it is the only safe foundation. In what then does it consist? Perhaps in this, that Christ, the beginning of our salvation, opened to us the way, while he created for us, through his merits, the means of deserving it? By no means; but because we have been chosen in him from eternity, before the foundation of the world, and that altogether not through our own desert, but according to the predestinating will of God; because we have been delivered, through his sufferings, from condemnation and everlasting ruin; because the Father has accepted us in him as children and heirs, and has placed us, being reconciled by his blood, under his protection, that we may never perish, and has so ingrafted us in him that we may be said already to have passed, through hope, into eternal life. And Christ perfects the elect; in a word, he seeks such to follow him who deny themselves and take up the cross. All perfection is found in the example of Christ. But man is not justified before God by his works; we declare, on the other hand, that all who are of God are renewed and new creatures, and pass from the kingdom of sin into the kingdom of righteousness. And hereby prove they their calling, as good fruit proves the good tree.

Through this one thing we answer the slander of those godless men, who represent us as if we regarded good works as useless; or preached a too easy forgiveness of sins, and so tempted men to sin, because pardon is offered through grace.

The second chapter treats of Faith. Faith is twofold: it consists, on the one side, in a conviction of the being of God, and in an historical belief in Christ, which we have in common with the wicked spirits. On the other, it consists in the knowledge of God, and of Christ as the redeemer, and in a sure trust in his mercy.

In speaking of the Trinity, he shows that he was already occupied with the errors of Servetus, but without mentioning his name. "Impious men," he says, "ridicule us because we acknowledge one God in three persons." He would have entered further into this subject, but he was concerned at present with believers only: he proves however the unity of God in three persons, according to Scripture, and defends the use of the terms *οὐσία* and *ὑποστάσεις*, showing also that in the controversy with the Arians it was necessary to employ the word *ὁμοούσιος*, and to assert, against the Sabellians, that in the unity of these exists a Trinity of persons. Hence we must use the word *consubstantial* in reference to the one, and the word Trinity when speaking of the others.

A short exposition of the Apostles' Creed is introduced in this place.\*

In describing the order in which the several parts of the work

\* "Quod vero ad inferos descendit, id significat afflictum a Deo fuisse ac divini iudicii horrorem et severitatem sensisse; ut iræ Dei intercederet, ac ejus justitiæ nostro nomine satisfaceret. Neque intelligendum est patrem illi unquam iratum fuisse—sed hoc sensu. Omnia irati Dei signa expertus est, ut coactus fuerit urgente angustia exclamare: Pater, Pater, ut quid me dereliquisti? Id sane dicitur ipsum descendisse ad inferos, non autem in locum aliquem certum (cui *Lymbi* nomen confictum est,) quo patres veluti carcere clausi tenerentur. Hæc fabula—nihil tamen quam fabula est. Neque in eum sensum accipi debet Petri locus quem semper obtrudunt; hoc enim tantum voluit Petrus, virtutem redemptionis exhibitam et plane manifestatam eorum spiritibus, qui ante id tempus defuncti fuerant, etc. Fideles tunc præsentī adspectu perspexerunt ejus visitationem. Petrus hanc eorum anxiam expectationem carcerem appellat. Scriptura testificatur tum in sinu Abrahæ eos fuisse, ut nunc etiam sunt, hoc est in requie. Hæc particula de descensu ad inferos a nonnullis amissa, minime tamen superflua, utpote quæ rerum maximarum maxima mysteria continet."

Of the Holy Ghost he says, "Verum cum Patre et Filio Deum esse, tertiam personam Sacrosanctæ Trinitatis, Patri et Filio consubstantialem ac coæternum, omnipotentem, omniumque creatorem."

Of the church he says, "We believe the holy catholic or universal church, that is, the society of all the elect, whether angels or men, living or dead, among all nations, whose head is Christ."

of salvation are to be viewed, he shows how God proceeds with his people. Those whom He has chosen hear his call; those whom He has called he justifies; and those whom He has justified he glorifies. Paul, in the passage referred to, is describing nothing else than the eternal *election* through which God appointed them to salvation, even before their birth.

It is in this manner that God reveals, without exception, the election by grace, and no one can enter the kingdom of heaven who is not called and justified. The holy Scriptures employ the word choice, or election, in order to accommodate themselves to our capacity, and to indicate the state of our souls when the calling and the justifying have shown themselves in operation. Thence it happens, that they number among the people of God those on whom God has exercised his power, although they have not been elected; while, on the other side, many of the elect are not numbered among them, because they have not as yet exhibited any outward sign of their election. But no reference is here made to that unchangeable providence of God which can never contradict itself. Those of whom we have spoken are described only as the children of God may become known to us, that is, as those who have been under the influence of his Spirit.\*

But as the church consists of the elect people of God, its true members can never finally fall or perish; their salvation rests on such a firm foundation, that, were the whole world destroyed, they would remain secure. In the first place, their salvation is established by the counsel of God's election; and to alter this, God's own eternal wisdom must suffer change or decay. The elect therefore may perhaps stumble, or be driven to and fro, or even fall, but they cannot perish, for God upholds them with his hand. This is what Paul says. God never repents of his gifts of grace or of his election. Those whom He has chosen He gives to Christ, to his faithfulness and protecting power, that they may never perish, but that He may raise them all at the last day. They may wander, they may fall under this good shepherd, but they can never perish. Nor must we doubt that God has had a church upon earth from the beginning of the world; nor that this church, according to his own promise, will ever cease to exist. For although the human race was rendered corrupt by the sin of Adam, He ever sanctifies some out of the polluted mass as vessels of honor, that there may never be a

\* Powerful impressions which only act on the surface. The non-elect may be for a time wrought upon by the Spirit of God.

period without evidence of his mercy. In a word, we must believe in the church, that, trusting in the goodness of God, we may be convinced that we ourselves belong to it, and that with the rest of God's elect, with whom we have been chosen and in part justified, we shall hereafter be perfectly justified and glorified. We cannot however understand the incomprehensible wisdom of God: it is not our office to know or determine who are the elect, and who are the reprobate.

In order to place ourselves on the eminence from which Calvin took his grand, majestic view of the universe, we must proceed from the idea of the church, to contemplate the hidden community of the elect, who, for the most part, are still in a state of slumber, unconscious as yet of their election, and in respect to whom the business of the preacher is to awaken their souls, and bring them to Jesus.

Calvin well observes on this point, that contented with having been made children of God, and with finding life in Christ, we ought not to inquire any further into the mystery. They who will not be satisfied with this, but would go deeper into the subject, excite God's anger against themselves; and because they would fathom the abyss of his majesty, they must expect to be consumed in the splendor of his glory. Since Christ is the truth, it is in his word that we must study the will of God. When we have faith in him, we know certainly that God has chosen us in him from the beginning. If we do not receive this, our faith in the catholic church is null and void.

How profoundly he had meditated upon this theme, is shown by some particular thoughts, which are found expressed in the subsequent editions, and which he could only have acquired by experience.

"That the rashness of man might not be allowed to go too far, God shows us by experience how greatly the divine judgments exceed our comprehension. And thus it often occurs, that those who seem to us altogether lost, and are mourned as such, are recalled through his mercy to the right way, while those who seemed secure fall away and perish. The eyes of God alone can perceive who will finally persevere."

He speaks in the following paragraph, on the Members of the church, and on Excommunication.

"Although we cannot as yet recognize with certainty the elect, Scripture affords us a test by which we may distinguish them from the reprobate; and Christian love instructs us to re-



gard all as members of the church who acknowledge the same God and the same Saviour, by the confession of faith, by the example of their life, and participation of the sacraments. And it is thus we are to regard them, though we may discover many imperfections in their conduct (for we must not look for perfection in this world), unless they are found to foster and indulge their vices. There is reason also to hope that, under the guidance of God, they may continually advance towards perfection, till they have overcome every kind of imperfection and are admitted into the eternal happiness of the elect." This patient, benevolent exposition of the main principle which he supported through his whole life, is eminently characteristic of his mind and feelings. Faith in God and in Christ was all that he required as the condition upon which to acknowledge a man a member of the church.

"But those who do not agree with us in faith, or who deny it by their conduct, vain and wicked people, intoxicated with the lusts of the flesh, all who are thus characterized are at present no members of the church. It is to meet such cases that excommunication is intended, in order that those who are but a burden to the church may be shut out from the communion of the faithful. And yet must we not despair of them, as if they were utterly rejected by God. It is strictly forbidden us to exclude any one from the number of the elect, or to despair of him, as if he were already lost; unless it be a matter of certainty that he is condemned by the Word of God. Should a man even of set purpose, and with determined hostility, assail the truth, seeking to destroy the Gospel, to annihilate the name of God, and to resist the Holy Spirit, a sin which can never be forgiven, yet can we so rarely be sure of this, if it can ever become known, that it is far better for us to await the day of revelation than to anticipate the judgment of God. We surely ought not to allow ourselves a freedom in judging, which might seem to limit the power of God, and to prescribe limits to his mercy, which, if it were his will, could change the most wicked into the most holy.

"Rather should it be our endeavor to judge one another with childlike simplicity, to think as well as possible of the words and works of others, and not to pervert them by our suspicions or our malice. Even when some are so wicked that we cannot avoid judging them severely, still we must commend them to the hand of God, and hope for something better than we see.

Thus acting towards each other with mutual love, we shall not rashly intrude into the secret councils of God, or involve ourselves in the darkness of error. In a word, we must not condemn the person, who is in God's hand and power, but view the works of every one according to the divine rule. It is in this manner that excommunications ought to be considered. St. Paul thus gave a man over unto Satan for temporal punishment, that he might be saved forever; and although it is not lawful to hold communion, either outward or inward, with the excommunicated, yet ought we by admonition, teaching, gentleness, brotherly kindness and prayer to God, to lead them back to communion; and not only should we thus treat our erring brethren, but even Turks and Saracens, and other enemies of the Christian faith. Far from us be the method which many have employed to bring them into the church, denying them, when in their power, fire and water, and the other elements, performing towards them no duty of humanity, and pursuing them with the sword!"

Our author treats in the next place of the communion of the saints. The forgiveness of sins, he says, belongs to those only who have been engrafted into the church, seeing that out of the church is no salvation. Hope and love accompany faith, but cannot establish it; it is not love that justifies, but faith. St. Paul says nothing contrary to this; faith, hope and love being gifts of the Holy Ghost, and only bestowed by the mercy of God.

In the third chapter the subject of prayer is treated. The Lord's Prayer furnishes the principal theme for observation, and the main argument employed against prayers addressed to the saints. Having spoken of secret prayer, Calvin recommends public worship, but carried on in the language of the country, by singing, and by the whole congregation,—*una voce, eodem ore*.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the Sacraments. A sacrament, it is said, is an outward sign, whereby God manifests his goodness towards us, in order to support our weakness. It may also avail as a testimony of the grace of God, made known to us by means of an outward sign; but without the Word of God and faith, signs would be altogether nothing; they are, as it were, a visible word. The Jews had circumcision, to which were added purifications and offerings: these were their sacraments, and Christ has instituted in their place baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Baptism has a threefold signification. It is, in the first place, a sensible image of our purification,—the witness that all our sins have been done away. It is wrong to regard it as a sign only.

In the second place, baptism is our renewing. It is altogether an error to suppose that we are purified from original sin, so as to become like Adam before the fall. Original sin is the corruption of our nature; children bring their condemnation with them when they come into the world, for the seed of sin which is in them deserves condemnation in the sight of God. Now this condemnation is taken away at our baptism, when God assures us of the forgiveness of sins. So also is righteousness acquired, so far as the people of God can attain to it in this world; that is, by imputation only, because God for his mere mercy's sake will regard them as righteous and innocent. But that corruption which our nature has suffered is never wholly removed, but continually brings forth new fruit, the works of the flesh. This wickedness is only suppressed by baptism, when we hold fast the promise through faith; we are baptized, therefore, for the mortification of the flesh. This begins with baptism, but is only perfected in heaven.

In the third place, we enjoy through baptism this inestimable consolation, that we are not only planted in the life and death of Christ, but are so united with him, that we are partakers of all his blessings.

The author next speaks of the anabaptists, and it is remarked that the baptism of John and Christ was no rebaptism, but the baptism of the Holy Ghost. He also speaks of the laying on of hands.

"Since baptism instructs us of the promises of God, and directs us to exhibit our faith before men, how can one doubt whether the children of Christians ought to be baptized? But, in the first place, it is presumptuous to assume that faith is impossible at this age; for if the Lord calls some of these little ones, and admits them as heirs into his kingdom, and as eternal happiness consists in the knowledge of God, why should He not give them the enjoyment and the first feeling of that good, which they are hereafter to possess in all its fulness? Why should not God allow himself to be seen 'in a glass darkly,' by those who are hereafter to behold Him face to face?"

Such was the beautiful, the filial character of Calvin's faith! He continues: "If we cannot comprehend this, yet let us recollect how glorious are all the works of God, and how secret is his

counsel." And further: "If we confess that God elects the vessels of mercy even in their childhood, we cannot absolutely deny them faith, the only way to life. Holy Scripture sets down no particular age as that in which the announcement of salvation must be made; and this is sure, that no one can be saved without faith, whether he be grown up or a child. Baptism therefore belongs of right to children, since faith is common to them with the adult. I do not mean that faith begins at the moment of birth, but that all the elect enter life through faith, whatever be their age. Moreover, God has invited children to come unto him; and when He says that the kingdom of heaven is theirs, we do but fulfil his will in bringing children to be baptized. The circumcision of children may be regarded as a command to allow them baptism. That God is willing to be the God of our children he has promised us as Christians, and therefore given us the name of saints."

Of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper Calvin thus speaks: "As we see the bread given us as a sign of Christ's body, we must endeavor to understand the following comparison. Thus, as the bread nourishes the life of the body, upholds and supports it, so the body of Christ is the food and support of our spiritual life. Since the wine is the symbol of his blood, so we believe that Christ acts spiritually in our souls, as wine acts on the body. Others, to show their wisdom, have added to the simplicity of Scripture, and pretend that Christ is actually and really present. Others have gone still further, and assert that He is there in exactly the same dimensions as when he hung upon the cross; and so forth.\* But let us believe that the sacrament is spiritual,—a something whereby God will feed our souls, not our stomachs; and let us seek Christ, not as to be seen or apprehended by the bodily senses, but to be recognized by his presence in the soul."

Having considered and answered the arguments of those who contend for the presence of Christ's natural body in the sacrament, Calvin thus summarily states his own view of this important subject—"Christ having ascended with his own proper body into heaven, there sits at the right hand of the Father, that is, he rules in the might, power, and glory of the Father. But this kingdom is bounded by no limits of space;

\* "Alii prodigiosam transubstantiationem excogitarunt; alii panem, ipsum esse corpus, alii sub pane esse; alii signum tantum et figuram corporis proponunt."



it is extended according to his will. He exercises his dominion in heaven and on earth. By this he shows his presence. He is ever with his people ; he lives in them ; he upholds, strengthens, and defends them, and this no less manifestly than were he present in the body. In this way it is, that the body and blood of Christ are offered us in the sacrament. For the sake of clearness, I say that his body is *truly* and *really*, but not *naturally* offered us. And this I say, to indicate that it is not the actual body which is given us, but all the benefits which Christ by his body has procured us. This is the presence of the body which the intention of the sacrament requires."

The fifth chapter treats of Confirmation, Penitence, Extreme Unction, and Ecclesiastical Orders. Matrimony is considered in connection with the errors introduced by the Catholics, and their false views are confuted.

In the following chapter the author speaks of Christian freedom :—"The church only has the right to judge of doctrine ; and when, renouncing its own wisdom, it is governed by the Holy Spirit, and decides by the rule of Scripture, it does not err." Here follows a statement of the first principles of church government. The church, it is said, exercises discipline in respect to its members, and the preacher has a right to direct their opinions, but not so as to oppress them. Calvin's views on church establishments are altogether evangelical : he regards them as standing on the same ground as bishops, and plainly expresses the sentiments more fully developed at a later period.\*

In regard to the relation which the church holds to the state, he asserts, that the order and laws of the church are by no means dependent upon the state ; although, on the other hand, the state is bound to defend the church. He acknowledges the right of the temporal government to punish criminals with death, according to God's commandment, and insists that it is the duty of subjects to render obedience even to unworthy and wicked rulers. The private individual must not abuse the sacred majesty of government : it must be left to those who are legally placed in situations of authority to bridle the license of the sovereign. But God is the King of kings ; Him must we first obey.

In order to show the reader with what approbation this work, which may in one sense be regarded as the first and the last of

\* The author's own remarks on this subject will be found in a subsequent chapter.

its author, was received,—how little he had calculated upon such success, how thankfully he acknowledged it, and what he himself thought of the book, I quote some passages out of the preface to the last edition, published in 1559.

“As I did not expect, when the first edition of this work was published, that it would be received with the favor which God, by his inestimable mercy, has accorded it, I gave myself but little labor in its composition, and was solicitous of brevity. But having found it in the course of time regarded in a manner which I could scarcely have dared to desire, much less to expect, I have felt myself bound to do whatever lies in my power for the satisfaction of those who have received my doctrine with so much affection, and who might justly accuse me of ingratitude were I not to meet their wishes as far as my poor ability will permit. As I have endeavored, therefore, to do my duty in this respect, not only when the book was printed the second time, but in every subsequent edition, it has been much enlarged and improved. That I was not myself weary of the work which I had undertaken, will be easily understood when I say, that never was I happier than while employed in arranging the matter which you will find in the following pages, and which I trust will obtain your approval. I may also venture to add, that I have not been backward to serve the church of God in this plan with all possible affection. Being brought last winter to the brink of the grave by the quartan ague, the more the disorder pressed upon me, the less did I spare myself; laboring till the work was completed, which might prove, after my death, how anxious I was to satisfy those who sought to profit by its contents. Gladly would I have done more, but enough will have been done, if done well.”

He then speaks of some slanderous reports, by which he was represented to have gone over to the papists, and concludes, “Now the devil and his whole band deceive themselves grievously, if they expect to subdue or discourage me by such miserable falsehoods.”

In the preface to the second edition he thus speaks of the object which he had in view:—“My design has been to prepare, or instruct, those who wish to devote themselves to the study of theology, to afford them an easy introduction to the reading of Scripture, and to show them how to pursue and hold, without wandering, the good and the right way. And I think that I have so analyzed the sum of the Christian religion in all its

parts, and have exhibited it in such order, that he who makes himself master of the method which I have pursued, will easily understand what he should seek for in Scripture. By this means I shall also have avoided the necessity of entering into long disputes in my commentaries on the several books of Scripture, the present work being a general guide for those who desire assistance in studying the subjects here treated, and enabling me to avoid the extravagance and prolixity for which I have so little love. My readers, therefore, will be spared unnecessary fatigue and disgust, as I hope they will discover for themselves rather than by my boasting. Above all, I recommend you to the grace of God, desiring not to be forgotten in your holy prayers, according to the fruit which you may receive from my labors." \* \* \*

It was necessary to give these extracts from the first of Calvin's dogmatical writings, since they afford a proof of the remarkable fact, that this extraordinary man never varied in his belief. He is perhaps almost the sole instance of a man's having reached, at the age of twenty-five, the full development of his principles,—a period at which the generality of men only begin to develop their opinions,—and of having, at the end of his life, nothing, as Augustine had, to retract.

In relation to this, the unusually early maturity of his faith, we may especially instance his exposition of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, some learned men having contended that he rather inclined, in the first edition of the 'Institutes,' to the views of Luther. The subjoined passages however show that he was then as firmly settled in his opinions, as he was when in 1549 he entered into communion with Zurich. In his views respecting election and free-will he was no less consistent than in his later years, except that in his first revision of the work these doctrines received a systematic form. If even, therefore, we must fix the date of his theological maturity at a somewhat later period, considering it perhaps as reached when he published his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans at Strasburg, and when he contemplated the whole doctrine of the Gospel in its vast depths, and embraced it in his system, yet we must allow that his faith had long before reached maturity, his epistle

\* How much care he had employed about this celebrated work since its first appearance, he shows in the following lines:—

"Quos animus fuerat tenui excusare libello,  
Discendi studio, magnum fecere volumen."

to Francis exhibiting a degree of force and vigor which he never afterwards surpassed.

Beza's judgment in this respect is important: he had ample opportunity to observe him personally. His words are, "The doctrine which he held at first, he held to the last. He varied in nothing, a thing which can be said of very few theologians." "He never had occasion," says Scaliger, "to recant; which, considering how much he wrote, is a subject for admiration. I leave you to judge whether he was not a great man."

Bossuet, who scrutinized the reformers very narrowly, to discover their variations, considers the question whether Calvin ever changed his opinions as Luther did, and answers, "While Calvin had a better regulated mind than Luther, it is also to be recollected that he wrote a long time after the pretended reform commenced, so that the matters in dispute had then been frequently considered, and the doctors having had more leisure to digest them, the doctrine of Calvin appeared more uniform than that of Luther."

According to my own opinion, this great reformer never varied either on the subject of faith or in the principles of discipline. His views were not so clear on the unity of the church, or on the means of establishing it.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### REFORMATION IN SWITZERLAND, PARTICULARLY IN GENEVA.

THE mild light of the Gospel had long illuminated the mountains of Switzerland, when Geneva was still lying bound in the ancient darkness. But everything was wonderfully prepared for the mission of the great teacher, who was there to renew the contest, when a leader failed in the south.

Zwingli was born at Wildhausen in Toggenburg in the year 1484. The earliest of all the reformers, he preached in the convent of Einsiedeln, in 1516, against pilgrimages; and two years after at Zurich, against Samson, the seller of indulgences. Having established the reformation, he perished October 11, 1531, in the



battle of Cappel, in which, like a Maccabee, striving for the things of the Lord, he fell armed near the banner of Zurich. He is said to have exclaimed, "This is a misfortune; but what matters it? They may kill the body, but cannot harm the soul."

The death of Zwingli\* created a great void. He had done much. Distinguished for courage, firmness, probity, and the love of truth, he was less passionate than Luther; and having, like Melancthon, a finely cultivated intellect, he indulged a taste for philosophy, which often led him to draw conclusions which the more cautious Calvin would not have ventured to express. On the subject of providence and predestination his language is bold and startling. He speaks also with daring freedom respecting eternal life, on damnation, and on the admission of the virtuous heathen into the kingdom of heaven. One is sometimes almost led to suspect that he did not clearly understand every part of his own system,—a very possible consequence of his early separation from the Roman church. Human merit and the power of conscience, he rejects from his system, as Luther and Calvin rejected them from theirs. But while he affords ample evidence of the honesty of his heart and mind, he plainly differs from the great men here mentioned. In the whole of his labors connected with the reformation we may discover the intellectual tendency of his opinions; this is especially the case in regard to the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Calvin on the contrary, and still more Luther, contemplated that sacrament as something sublime and mysterious; and had Zwingli been alive at the time, the Zurich agreement would hardly, it is probable, have been brought to a conclusion.

Luther willingly retained music, images, and the altar in the house of God. Zwingli on the other hand, wanting in imagination and elevation of thought, was opposed to church-singing, and rejected images with greater violence than Calvin, who only feared the Roman catholic corruptions. The experience of three hundred years, during which the Lutheran church has now existed, proves that the use of outward means does not necessarily lead to superstition and heresy, and that this reformer therefore went too far. If it be said that the reformers in the north began from within, while those of the south began from without, purifying the church from visible corruptions, the testimony of history may be adduced in contradiction to such a statement. Both Zwingli and Calvin contended no less than

\* Then in his 47th year.

Luther against the fundamental errors of the catholic church, and the reformation in outward things was only the consequence of an improvement in principles: the rest depended upon the personal character of the men themselves.

In the view which these two reformers took of church government we have a striking illustration of the different tendency of their minds. Zwingli was decidedly republican, and insisted, like Calvin, upon the apostolic equality of the clergy, and their independence of inspectors or overseers. Not so the Lutheran church. The pure presbyterian form of church government may thank Calvin for its existence. All three surrender their rights to the temporal power, without securing the church against its encroachments.

Zwingli defended in several discourses sixty-seven propositions, in German, and the reformation was established in Zurich as early as the year 1523. Its principles were also early received in Basel, where Capito and *Æcolampadius* (*Köpfli* and *Hauschein*) illustrated them in their sermons. The latter, the friend of Zwingli, to whom he became what Melancthon was to Luther, had been early obliged on account of his opinions to seek protection in Sickingen's fortress of Ebernburg. When Sickingen fell in his war against the elector of Treves, *Æcolampadius* settled at Basel, where he was appointed professor, and where, two years later, Farel also took up his residence and became his coadjutor. The Lord's Supper was administered for the first time according to the simple rite of the reformed church, and in the very spirit of Zwingli's opinions, in the year 1525. Zwingli published about the same time his elementary work on the evangelical faith (*'Commentarius de vera et falsa Religione,'*) and dedicated it to the king of France. The free expressions which he employs in this work clearly indicate what the people of those times thought of Francis, and what were the hopes they fostered. *Leó Juda* published a German translation of the Bible in the same year, and thereby laid the foundation for that of Luther. Thus neither the resistance of the catholic cantons, nor the distressing controversy between Zwingli and Luther, could stop the progress of the reformation.

The canton of Bern, though somewhat later, contributed greatly to the furtherance of the cause of truth. It was not till the year 1528 that a public disputation was held in that city. Zwingli, *Æcolampadius*, *Pellicanus*\* and Haller, Capito and

\* *Pellicanus* (*Kirschner*) was appointed professor of Hebrew at Zurich.

Bucer from Strasburg, and three hundred and fifty priests, were present on the occasion. The result was highly favorable to the reformation. Similar impressions were created in Schaffhausen and Basel, where Grynaeus and Sebastian Münster were now associated with Ecolampadius.

A conference was held at Marburg in 1529, on the subject of the Lord's Supper; and in the following year Zwingli laid before the emperor Charles an exposition of the creed embraced by the Swiss reformers. It was the necessary expression of his candid mind, a clear and intelligible statement of his faith; but it obtained little favor in Germany, where it was regarded as tending to expose more clearly than ever the difference existing between the several parties of the reformed. In the year 1529 the catholic cantons, Schwyz, Uri, Unterwalden, Zug and Lucern, had already formed themselves into a league against Zurich, Bern, Basel, St. Gallen, Mühlhausen and Biel. Two years after this, the unhappy conflict took place at Cappel, in which Zwingli perished; and Zurich was forsaken by its confederates.

The stage upon which Calvin was to perform the important part assigned him was prepared by another useful and devoted man. A missionary had appeared in the territory of Bern, whose bold, daring and eloquent address had already rendered him conspicuous as a reformer. This was William de Farel, a French nobleman, born of wealthy parents in Gap in Dauphiny, and educated first under Lefevre in Paris, and subsequently under Briçonnet in Meaux. He held a disputation in Basel, but was compelled by the catholic party to leave the city. Erasmus never forgave the expressions which he applied to him, and called him in return, by way of ridicule, *Phallicus*, that is, probably, the extravagant. Farel preached the Gospel in Mumpelgard, and became acquainted in Strasburg with Capito and Bucer.

Bern exercised its influence at that time over a great portion of French Switzerland. This was still more the case when it succeeded in conquering a large part of the surrounding territory. Farel, as an evangelical missionary, preached with a fervor which everywhere excited the most enthusiastic love for the pure doctrine of the Gospel. Viret of Orbe, a spiritual, venerable and learned man, who had also studied at Paris, readily afforded him his support. Farel, unwearied in his labors, established the reformation at Neuenburg. Sufferings, reproaches, dangers did not repress his zeal. Still neither of these reformers

thought of Geneva, and Farel himself hastened to the valleys of Piedmont.

I must now be allowed to take a brief glance at the history of the celebrated city above alluded to.

Geneva was a well-known city of the Allobroges in the time of Cæsar, who there erected the long walls against the Helvetii. It continued to be a place of distinction under the following emperors; and we learn from several inscriptions that, having been destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt in the reign of Aurelian, and called after his name. In the fourth century, the inhabitants embraced the Christian religion, and the city became an episcopal see. The following century saw it the capital of the newly-established kingdom of Burgundy. Chlodowic took it, and a church was erected, in the place of one destroyed, dedicated to the apostle Peter. King Gundebald gave the people laws. At that time many Arians inhabited the place.\* It was soon transferred to the French monarchy, and when Charles the Great came to Geneva, he re-established its ancient privileges. By the arrangement entered into at Verdun, Geneva fell to the share of the Lotharingians, and subsequently to the new Burgundian territory. Conrad was there crowned king of Burgundy. At length, under Henry the Fowler, it was united to the German empire. Counts of Geneva, however, existed from the time of Charlemagne; and the power of these nobles, residing in the mountains in the neighborhood of the city, continually increased. The bishop of the place also arrogated to himself more and more authority; and hence the records of Geneva exhibit a perpetual struggle against the usurpation both of the temporal and spiritual governors. There were, however, still some supports for freedom. Such was the jurisdiction in criminal causes, the choice of the bishop by the people and the chapter, the necessity of his appealing to the council and the people in all matters of doubt and importance, and the privilege of the former to enter into alliances with the neighboring states. It is well known how little authority the emperors possessed in many of the cities subjected to their dominion; their power was too much exhausted by their struggles in Italy. Thus with regard to Geneva, the bishops had the chief authority in the city itself, and the nobles in the surrounding country. Both lived in a

\* Picot, t. i. *Hist. de Genève*. It is from this writer, with occasional references to Beza and Drelincourt, that the author has derived his materials for the present sketch.



state of constant feud with each other, yet the city flourished, became rich and renowned.

Frederic Barbarossa (1153) resigned the entire government of the place into the hands of the bishop, and supported him against the efforts of the nobles.\* The citizens were grateful for this measure; but feuds did not cease, and the people at length saw themselves compelled to seek the protection of the dukes of Savoy. This gave a new turn to the history of the city. Three parties were now to be seen in Geneva; the one on the side of Savoy, the other supporting the episcopal government, and the third that of the nobles. Count Amadeus of Savoy assumed to himself in great part the rights of the counts of Geneva, and granted the citizens many privileges. From this period they had a council, taxes, and arms. Soon after four syndics were appointed, chosen from the people (1285-92). These syndics were attended by twelve counsellors, not yet however chosen for life. Savoy lost little time in besieging the count of Geneva; the dukes retained possession of the strong fortress of the island, and the title of "Vidomme" for 230 years. This is the source of those subsequent convulsions, and of that strife with Savoy which existed for so many years; for although Switzerland, in 1308, was declared free, the dukes of Savoy never ceased to enlarge their pretensions to authority. At the beginning of the fifteenth century they possessed the whole of the surrounding territory, and fixed their residence, from time to time, at Geneva; but when Charles III. of Savoy, against the will of the council, entered the city with his troops, and established his court there, the people, maddened by the insults to which they found themselves exposed, resolved to adopt the reformation, and entered into a league with the protestant canton of Bern. This alliance induced the citizens to accept the form of government which prevailed in the Swiss cantons, and to constitute a threefold council,—the lesser council, the council of sixty which was over this inferior body, and the council of two hundred which was over both.†

\* Under the bishop Simon de Granson, in 1211, Geneva took part in the crusade against the Albigenses, and thus helped to retard the progress of the truth, through which it was to acquire protection and freedom.

† In the time of Calvin the supreme power resided in the council of 200, which alone had the right to make or abolish laws. This was of great importance in the affair of Servetus. The lesser council could neither change nor soften the decrees of the former. In the present day, the lesser council is called *Conseil d'Etat*; it is the administrative and executive power. The greater council is *représentative et souverain*, and is the judge in the last instance. No law can be established without its

We have here briefly described the revolutions of this little Savoyard state, which, with a holy anticipation perhaps of future greatness, had already adopted, even under the bishops, the significant motto, "After darkness I hope for light." Geneva, so severely and so often tried in the struggle for political freedom, was destined to become a rallying-point for the south in the approaching spiritual revolution. On the banks of the lovely lake Lemman, encircled by fruitful vineyards, by alps and glaciers, crowning the summits of the majestic Mont Blanc, Geneva would have been an earthly paradise, unequalled for its beauty, had not strife and sin ruined this, as well as every other sanctuary of peace and love. It was a small, almost invisible, point in the midst of great kingdoms, forming a state numbering not more than 20,000 souls.\* And yet more insignificant was little Wittenberg, the cradle of evangelical power. From these instances the world ought to learn, that in the kingdom of Christ it is not the employment of outward means or force which gives success, but the working of the Spirit which is almighty.

Who does not linger with devotion by the last resting-place of Luther and Melancthon in that church, to the door of which the bold reformer affixed his ninety-five propositions? Who does not feel inspired with love and thankfulness as he contemplates their portraits, or enters the once venerable Augustine monastery assigned to Luther for his abode! or even as he stands before the statue erected at the commemoration of the reformation, and which affords so noble a proof of the zeal of his followers in these later times! Who does not visit the old fortress of Wartburg, on the romantic rock so famed in German story, where Luther began his translation of the Bible; where the old pulpit still stands from which he so often bore witness to the truth! But no statue has been erected in Geneva† to the memory of Calvin; nothing exists even to point out his dwelling-place. We seek his grave; we look for some inscription,—for his name; but, according to his own strongly expressed desire, no stone marks the spot where his remains were deposited. It is not possible even, with any degree of certainty, to point out his

consent. The council of 60 or 70 exists no longer; it was for diplomatic objects only.

\* At the beginning of the sixteenth century, it contained 12,000; in 1543, 13,000; in 1550, 20,000; at present about 40,000.

† A statue has been erected in our own times to Rousseau in Geneva. The two most famous men of this state, Calvin and Rousseau, form a rude contrast, and point out the two extremes in the history of this republic, and especially of France.

grave. He would not have his ashes honored; and as the memorials of his death have vanished from the churchyard, so have those of his life from the city.\*

Through the influence of this great man, of whom Montesquieu says, "The Genevese ought to observe the day of his arrival in their city as a festival," Geneva became a reformed Rome,—a title which it readily adopted, but in a far other sense than that in which the name belongs to the ultramontane capital. In the highest part of the city, where once stood a temple to Apollo, is still seen the old St. Peter's church of the sixth, and eleventh, century, as if Providence had destined it to become from the earliest times the antagonist of Rome.

It is interesting to trace the beginnings of the reformation in this city, now that three hundred years have passed away, and when, after the long reign of infidelity, the struggle is now being carried on against rationalism as it was formerly against darkness and superstition. Farel came to Geneva for the first time in the year 1532; he was then returning from his missionary journey in the valleys of Piedmont, where he had found the old evangelical doctrines of the Waldenses exhibiting many of the characteristics of the reformed opinions, and in some respects almost identical with them. He was spiritual, romantic, and a devoted partisan of the reformers.

The first mention which occurs of Farel is in the narrative of *la Sœur Jeanne de Jussie*, a nun of the convent of St. Claire. "Au mois d'Octobre vint à Genève un chétif malheureux prédicant nommé maître Guillaume."† This *chétif malheureux* however, by the power of his faith, sowed in that soil a little seed which has grown as high as the Alps, and now shadows many other mountains with its branches. Immediately after his arrival with Antony Saunier, his companion, he instructed the friends of the reformation in his private lodging. The clergy feared Farel, who was called the scourge of priests, and would fain have silenced him. He was summoned before the general vicar. The canons,

\* He was buried, says Drelincourt, à Plein-Palais, with so little ceremony, that some strangers who visited Geneva soon after his death, being curious to see his sepulchre, and expecting to behold some rich monument, were astonished to find the body of this saint simply covered with earth, like the bodies of the other faithful. Beza also speaks of this simple burial of Calvin; but adds, "Cui tamen parentavi his versiculis: Cur adeo exiguo, ignotoque in cespite clausus—Calvinus lateat rogas? Calvinum assidue comitata modestia vivum—Hoc tumultu manibus condidit ipsa suis. O te beatum cespitem tanto homine—O cui invidere cuncta possint marmora!"

† In her work entitled, 'Le Commencement de l'Hérésie de Genève.'

who were armed "to defend the catholic faith, and to die for it," assailed him with reproaches. "Come here, you ugly devil; have you been baptized? From what place do you come? What are you about, that you thus seek to throw the whole world into confusion? Who has given you authority to preach?"

Farel replied, "I have been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and am no devil. I go about to proclaim Jesus Christ, who died for our sins." They gnashed their teeth at him as he spoke; but allowing him to depart, an attendant of the vicar-general fired at him with a gun, which burst without doing him any harm. "Your weapons do not frighten me," said Farel; "you condemn us without listening to what we have to say." One of those present exclaimed, with a wrath like that of Caiaphas, "He makes a mock of God. Do we need anything further? he deserves death. Off with him to the Rhone!" He was immediately seized, dragged by the feet, and cruelly beaten in the face, his persecutors crying out, "It is better that this Lutheran heretic should perish than that the whole of the people should be perverted." When Farel answered, "Speak the words of God, and not those of Caiaphas!" the tumult increased: "Kill the Lutheran dog!" *Tue ce Luther, tue cette cagne!* while another exclaimed in his Savoyard dialect, "Tappa, tappa!" that is, "Strike, strike!" This call was soon obeyed; he was struck at with the dagger, but a counsellor who stood near drew him away and saved him, notwithstanding the willingness of the syndic to deliver him up to the murderous persecutors. By the care of his friends he was carried across the lake to Orbe.\* The unlucky issue of this first experiment did not in anywise discourage Farel; he immediately despatched the young Froment as a teacher to Geneva, under the pretence of instructing people to read and write in a month. Froment gave private lessons; but on New Year's-day (1533), when the hall was no longer sufficient to hold the crowds which came to hear him, he delivered his first public discourse, 'Against the False Prophets,' in the Molarsplats.

The fanaticism of the people generally was still violently excited against the reformers. This was the case in the council itself; but at this juncture the catholic bishop, who had carried off a young girl in the season of Lent, turned the indignation of

\* Peter Olivetan was also banished because he spoke in the pulpit against a monk who had abused the reformation. His translation of the Bible was also prohibited.



the multitude against himself, and was obliged to flee. A Dominican monk, Guy Furbity, was sent to Geneva, and with great pomp, but little discretion, argued in favor of all the catholic errors. He pretended, however, to approve of the injunction to preach nothing but what was found in Scripture.

Farel, Viret, and Froment now wandered forth under the protection of the Bernese. In the mean time the priests armed themselves, and the reformers followed their example. The council stepped in as a mediator, and Furbity was thrown into prison. At length he was obliged to consent to hold a public disputation with Farel in the presence of the council: he suffered a signal defeat, and Farel's triumph gave the first turn in favor of the reformation (1534). The monk could not, as he had promised, prove his doctrine from the Bible; and he was carried to prison in order to protect him from the rage of the people.

In these stormy times the bishop prudently but rarely allowed himself to be seen. The two parties became more inflamed against each other every day. Bern protected the reformers, Freiburg the episcopalians; the senate long hesitated between the two. At last, the influence of Bern and the power of truth determined the issue of the conflict. It was answered to the complaints of the Freiburgers, that the help of the Bernese could not be dispensed with in the struggle against the bishop. Thus political considerations were always in the way. Freiburg broke the league. The Bernese, who lived in the city, were allowed a church for themselves, and the three preachers had returned and were now in Geneva. Anathemas were pronounced on the part of the bishop and the pope. The reformers had a church in common with the bare-footed friars: but a plot was invented to poison the preachers (1535). It happened however on the appointed day, that Farel ate nothing, and that Froment dined out. The only one who partook of the poisoned soup was Viret, and he suffered from the effects through the whole of his following life. These proceedings, and the discovery of a plan to poison the bread and wine in the sacrament, excited the indignation of the people. Another public conference was attended by a great increase in the number of the reformed. Farel was now permitted to preach in the church of St. Germain and in the Magdalene, from which, at his entrance, the mass-reading priests hastily fled. This was the case even in the church of St. Peter. Farel opposed the council, which would not allow him to preach

in all the churches of the city. At length (August 10), he addressed the council of two hundred with such force and inspiration on the great principles of the evangelical faith, and concluded his discourse with so impressive a prayer, that objections and difficulties vanished, for God had heard his supplication. The greater part of the citizens joined the reformers, and the opposition of the canons was no longer of any avail. Two days after the above occurrence (August 12), the people were freed from their bonds, and the performance of mass was prohibited by law. The reformation edict of the 27th of the same month set aside the authority of the papacy; the bishop removed to Gex, and his see was declared vacant by a decree of the senate: at the same time the monasteries were put down. Farel preached to the nuns of St. Claire, on the text, "Mary went to the hill country to Elizabeth," in order to show that Christian women are not deprived of freedom, and that the blessed Virgin was not obliged to shut herself up to preserve her purity.

The nuns, with few exceptions, all left the city. They had borne the character of great simplicity: it created no slight surprise therefore, that after they were gone a subterraneous passage was discovered leading from their convent to a neighboring monastery; they were suspected from this of not being altogether indifferent to earthly vanities.

It was in this year that the first step was taken in furtherance of the political interests of the reformation. Three syndics were chosen on the side of the reformed. The city was fortified, the suburbs were pulled down, and the spirit of patriotism gained new strength every day. In the following year (1536) the duke of Savoy blockaded the city, and reduced it almost to a state of famine: his attacks however were successfully resisted. The citizens rejected the offer of aid from France, and commended themselves to the grace of God. Bern declared war against the duke the same year, and brought an army, in conjunction with Neuchâtel, of 7000 men to the assistance of the Genevese. Bonnivard was now set free,\*—he had labored so unceasingly in the cause of freedom, and had languished for six years in the dungeons of the Savoyard castle of Chillon.

Bern had a political object in view, and hoped to employ

\* Bonnivard wrote a history of Geneva. He gave his library to the city, and this was the foundation of the public library; he was also the founder of the Gymnasium.

Geneva as a defence against the power of Savoy. It was not without designs against its independence. This became so apparent, that in the year 1540, Charles V. saw occasion to protect Geneva as a free state against Bern, as it was formerly defended against Savoy.

Thus the citizens of Geneva struggled successfully for the freedom, which, with the reformation, and the deep moral and religious earnestness inspired by Calvin, became the source of their future greatness. A species of theocratic feeling was in the course of development,—a trust in God, which supported the little state in its severest trials; and the freedom which it thus acquired it has never lost.

Farel conducted the religious services with as much simplicity as possible. Among others, he had an early service every Sunday morning, at four o'clock, for the convenience of domestics. All shops were to be closed on the Sabbath. The communion was administered four times a year, and he himself distributed the bread. Baptism could be performed every day, and marriages, when notice had been given three times, after the sermon, and always publicly. Farel would have employed some degree of force to extirpate catholicism; but Bonnivard, the noble champion of freedom, obtained for the priests who sought forbearance and instruction the desired toleration.

But as yet the reformation was for the most part only outward. To form a right view of the still ~~unde~~ condition of the Genevese, let us hear Bonnivard, who before the reformation thus addressed his turbulent fellow-citizens:—"How can you reform the church, you who are yourselves so unreformed? You say, the monks and priests are unchaste, gamblers, drunkards; but you are the same. You wish to expel the popish clergy, and to put preachers of the gospel in their place. That in itself will be good, but it will be bad for you, who find all your comfort in forbidden pleasures. The preachers will establish a reformation which will subject vice to its merited punishment. You have hated the priests, who are too much like yourselves: you will hate the preachers, because they are not like you. Not two years will have passed away before you will wish they were priests, and will pay them their wages with a heavy cudgelling. Men are willing enough that justice should be exercised against others, but not against themselves. Love for freedom has degenerated into the love of licentiousness. Most people imagine

that reformation consists altogether in doing away with masses, monasteries, and saint-days." Events have proved that he prophesied correctly.

The rude spirit of the age however is shown in a still stronger light, by the fearful immorality which then prevailed in the city, through the scandalous licentiousness which had been introduced by the courtiers of the duke of Savoy.\* Unblushing luxury and wickedness existed in every quarter. The partisans of freedom or their confederates had conquered, but the other party was still in being. Many still adhered to the bishop; and several facts might be adduced to prove, that there were evil principles at work with which Luther had never to contend in Germany.

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## CHAPTER VII.

CALVIN IN ITALY.—HIS INTRODUCTION TO THE DUCHESS OF FERRARA.—HIS RESIDENCE AT HER COURT.

DURING these events Calvin was resident at Basel. His views were not particularly directed to Geneva, but extended far and wide. The news that freedom of opinion was becoming every day more diffused on the other side of the Alps,—that Ferrara was already the bright middle point of the circle,—impelled him, always ready to venture the uttermost, to make a journey into Italy, and to attempt an experiment in favor of the reformation in the very fortress of superstition. The New Testament, translated by Brucioli, had been published in 1530; and this was followed, within two years, by the other books of Scripture. Everything was prepared for him. The first two experiments made by Calvin to promote the reformation were too bold and extensive, and bore the character of an early and fiery enthusiasm. He set out on his journey from Basel most probably at the end of March, 1536,† soon after he had finished his Latin

\* A rule established in respect to one matter connected with the police of the city will sufficiently illustrate this: "Pourque suivant l'ancienne coustume, ces pécheresses soyent mieux dirigées, elles pourront eslire et se constituer une reine, laquelle prestera serment en leurs mains, sur les saints évangèles, d'exercer le dit emploi bien et fidèlement de tout son pouvoir sans affection ni haine."—*Thourel, Hist. de Genève.*

† This journey was possibly commenced somewhat earlier. Beza is doubtful on this point. Bayle fixes it at the end of 1535.



version of the first edition of the 'Institutes,' which he wished to take with him to Italy, where it could only be read in Latin.

Whatever the other circumstances of his journey, it seems probable that the open-hearted duchess of Ferrara had caused an invitation to be sent him; or, if not, that he had felt it as a necessary duty to undertake the task of confirming her in the knowledge of the truth. It appears indeed that the duchess, who now left the Lutheran for the reformed party, was won over by Calvin's work and visit to embrace his views. He travelled under the assumed name of Mr. Charles d'Espeville, because his own would have exposed him to trouble on his journey; and this name he frequently used in his correspondence, to the end of his life, that his letters might not prove perilous to his friends.

But the nobler part of his plan was not practicable: he could not remain long enough at Ferrara; the inquisition was in pursuit of him. He himself says, that he had no sooner seen the borders of Italy than he was obliged to return. We have scarcely any information respecting this journey. Somewhat however is known of Ferrara; and it is gratifying to behold the young and distinguished man enter a circle of such noble and enlightened souls. At Ferrara he met the lady de Soubise with her daughter, Anna de Parthenai, and her son, who afterwards became a conspicuous leader of the protestants in France. Calvin carried on a correspondence with him at a later period. He there also found Clement Marot, the poet, who, like Calvin, had been obliged to flee from France, after spending some time with the queen of Navarre in Bearn. Through the introduction of the lady de Soubise, Marot became secretary to the duchess of Ferrara.\*

We have no means of determining what evangelical teachers resided at Ferrara when Calvin visited that city. It is well known however that the protestant doctrine was extensively published through the pious men whom the duchess had invited. Liberal-minded scholars were placed at the head of the university, as Lelio Calcagnini, Lelio Giraldi, Marco Flaminio. It is even said that as early as the year 1528, many preachers proclaimed the Gospel in Ferrara. Calvin therefore found a field already prepared for him. But in the year 1536, the duke of Ferrara entered into a league with the pope and the emperor, and bound himself by a secret article to expel all the French residents from his court.

\* M'Cric, *Reform. in Italy*. Œuvres de Clem. Marot, t. ii. p. 178-84.

In consequence of this proceeding, the duchess saw herself obliged to discontinue her intercourse with the lady de Soubise and her family. Marot retreated to Venice; and it is probable that this was the persecution which also compelled Calvin to leave Ferrara. It is cause of regret, that, educated as he had been by men of such high worth, and so capable as he had shown himself to be of noble, intellectual culture, he was not allowed to remain longer near such a princess and her accomplished court, where the excellences of Italian refinement would have so well responded to the feelings of his own soul. But he was early forced into practical life, and obliged to struggle with the rudest spirits. He had drunk deeply of the olden literature; but there was wanting to this severe reformer of the south that tenderness of sensibility which had been awakened during the age of the Medici,—that refined feeling for the arts, which, brought from Greece, had almost obliterated the traces of the middle ages, and was still exercising its influence on the church.

On his return from Ferrara, Calvin formed the resolution to leave his native country forever. He hastened for the last time to Noyon, to greet once again the place of his birth. Having sold his paternal estate, and arranged his affairs, he took his brother Antony and his sister Maria away with him. Herr von Normandie, a distinguished man and a magistrate at Noyon, together with his family, accompanied him to Geneva. Several other persons did the same. As the scaffold threatened him wherever he might look, in France, he had proposed to return to Basel and Strasburg, and there to pass his time in quiet; but the war had rendered the roads between Lothringia and Flanders impassable; he was therefore obliged to pass through Savoy, and to hasten by a circuitous route to Geneva.

It was not without a struggle that he left his country and native city. In a hasty letter\* to a friend he says, "I am driven from the land of my birth: every step towards its boundaries costs me tears. Perhaps it is not permitted truth to dwell in France: so may it be perhaps with me: let her lot be mine." How divine providence ordered all his ways, and how he recognized its guidance in after times, we learn from his introduction to the Psalms. He was to be led to a place where he would be safe, and from whence he might arouse Italy and France, without being in the least disturbed by those who in their hatred would so willingly have burnt him to death.

\* From Fischer. Dr. Henry says, "I have not found this letter."

A little notice from Aosta shows how he persevered in scattering the seed of the reformation as he journeyed forward. During his unsettled, wandering life, while he was either travelling to Ferrara, or returning towards France, he lingered for a time in this delicious region. Muratori states, and it appears from the records of that city, that he preached the reformed doctrine there with great approbation, till the persecution again drove him away. There is a column in Aosta, about eight feet high, upon which the words are inscribed, "*Hanc Calvini fuga erexit anno 1541; religionis constantia reparavit anno 1741.*" No monument of the kind seems to have been erected before the year 1541; but the circumstances here spoken of occurred probably in 1535 or 1536. Muratori in his Annals says, "In this same year, finding that he was discovered, fled that wolf to Geneva." During the following April, May, and June, Calvin remained in Italy; in July he returned by Aosta to Noyon, and thence through Savoy to Geneva, which he reached in August.

But while so slight a record remains of Calvin's journey to the court of Ferrara, ample proof exists of the regard entertained for him by the duchess herself. The court of this daughter of Louis XII. was, as has been already intimated, a refuge for the persecuted reformers. Beza says of her: "This noble lady was already called to the practice of the purest holiness. Calvin visited her, confirmed her principles, excited her zeal for religion to the highest degree, so that she esteemed him before all others as long as she lived (*semper unice dilexerit*), and, now that she survives him, consecrates to his memory the fairest proof of her veneration."\*

Calvin never saw her again after leaving her court, but he continued to correspond with her by letter: one of his last was addressed to her. She entertained so much regard for him, that he never ceased, as the watchful guardian of her soul, to afford her the support and consolation of his faithful counsels. In a letter which she wrote to him from Montargis, in 1551, she thanks him, "for his useful admonitions, which she most willingly received and cherished, and prayed that he might long be spared:" it is subscribed *la bien votre*.†

\* The duchess was worthy of the highest affection, but had no attractions of person. Brantome says, "Encore qu'elle apparut n'avoir pas l'apparence extérieure tant grande à cause de la gâtüre de son corps, si est ce qu'elle en avoit beaucoup en sa majesté." See also Bayle, art. Ferrare.

† MSS. Gothanea.

The warnings which he gave her were written with the most perfect freedom and candor; she seems on one occasion, and on one only, to have for a moment vacillated. In November, 1554, he thus speaks of her: "We have received sad news of the duchess; her courage is overpowered by misusage and threats." This refers probably to the period when her husband joined with the inquisitor Ortiz in endeavoring to force her to recant. She may have found it necessary perhaps to yield in some things, but no mention is made of a recantation. Her heroic disposition, on the contrary, is amply proved by her conduct after the death of her husband in 1559, and when, on her return to France, she openly professed at Montargis her devotion to the protestant faith. The duke of Guise, to whom she had espoused her noble daughter Anna d'Este, once sent a gentleman (Malicorne) with a troop of horse against Montargis, and informed her that he would batter down the castle if she did not expel the protestant rebels. She sent for answer: "Consider well what you propose to do. If you come, I will be foremost in the breach, and will try whether you have the boldness to kill the daughter of a king. If you should commit such a deed, heaven and earth will avenge her death on you and on all your line, even on the very children in their cradles." This haughty answer cooled the duke's courage: his death followed soon after, and changed the direction of affairs.

That she remained constant to her profession to the end of her days, appears further from a letter addressed to her by Calvin, which, with a note written shortly before his death,\* I will cite, to exhibit more clearly the character of this admirable woman, and her relation to Calvin.

"I know, Madame, how God has strengthened you during the rudest attacks, and how by his grace you have piously resisted all temptations, not being ashamed of the cross of Jesus Christ. Whilst the pride of his enemies exalted them above the clouds, so much the more did you show yourself a nursing-mother of the poor faithful, driven from their homes, and knowing not where to hide themselves. I am well aware that a princess who cares only for the world would blush, and regard it as an injury, to hear her palace called an Hôtel-Dieu; but I could not show you greater honor than by speaking thus, and thereby recognizing and exalting the humanity which you exercise towards the children of God, who have found a refuge in your castle. Often, Madame, have I thought that God reserved

\* *Insct. Fr. Gen.* 10 Mai, 1563.



these trials for your old age, in order to pay himself the arrears which you have accumulated by your timidity in earlier years. I speak in the language of men ; for though you should do a hundred and a thousand times as much as you have done, you could never repay that which you owe him, day by day, for the infinite benefits which He continues to bestow upon you. But I learn that he has done you singular honor, employing you in such duties ; making you bear his standard, that He may be glorified in you ; choosing you as a lodging for his word, which is the inestimable treasure of salvation, and as a refuge for the members of his Son. So much the greater, Madame, ought to be your care to preserve your mansion pure and entire for the future, that it may be dedicated to him."

The other letter is as follows :\* "As the mother-in-law of the late M. de Guise, you have been so much the more beloved and honored, seeing that this has not deterred you from making a right and pure profession of Christianity, and that not with your lips only, but by the most notable of deeds. With regard to myself, I protest to you that this has always led me to view your virtues with so much the greater admiration."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

CALVIN'S ARRIVAL IN GENEVA.—CALVIN, FAREL, AND VIRET.—  
THEIR RELATION TO EACH OTHER.

As Melancthon and others in Germany willingly placed Luther above themselves, not seeking their own honor but that of God, so was it with Farel. When Calvin returned from Italy, and hastened to leave France for Germany, he first directed his journey to Geneva. He visited the preacher Viret, and would have continued his route. Beza says, "God conducted him hither." Calvin himself relates : "I intended to spend only one night there, everything being still in disorder and the city divided into hostile factions ; but I was discovered by a man (Du Tilly) who afterwards returned to popery ; and Farel, who was burning with incredible zeal to spread the Gospel, employed all his strength to retain me."

\* Msc. Fr. de Gen. 4 Ap. 1564.

Calvin seems to have answered like a young man, "that he would not bind himself to any one church, but would endeavor to be useful to all, wheresoever he might happen to be; that otherwise no time would be left him for his own improvement; and that he was not one of those who could afford to be always giving, without ever receiving." But Farel immediately replied, in his customary strong language, "Now I declare to you, in the name of the almighty God, to you who only put forth your studies as a pretence, that if you will not help us to carry on this work of God, the curse of God will rest upon you, for you will be seeking your own honor rather than that of Christ."

As the voice on the road to Damascus thundered through the soul of Paul, so did these words of Farel so impress themselves upon Calvin's conscience that he never forgot them. Even in the year 1557 he said,\* "As I was kept in Geneva, not properly by any express exhortation or request, but rather by the terrible threatenings of William Farel, which were as if God had seized me by his awful hand from heaven, so was I compelled through the terror thus inspired to give up the plan of my journey, but yet without pledging myself, for I was conscious of my timidity and weakness, to undertake any definite office."†

This was the decisive moment in his course; he felt it, and yielded himself to the will of God. Elected preacher and teacher‡ of theology, he would accept only the latter appointment; but the following year he was obliged to submit to the wishes of the citizens, who chose him as their preacher. Farel, who only sought the interests of the Gospel, modestly retired soon after to the little town of Neufchâtel, for a greater than he had appeared, —one who baptized with fire. Calvin was then twenty-seven years old, and he labored in Geneva twenty-eight. He came poor, and was appointed to his office without at first, it seems, receiving any stated income; all he obtained was some trifling contribution from the state; nor was it till the February of the following year that he had any aid, when it was given him in consideration of his having as yet received nothing.§

\* Pr. ad Ps.

† The first mention made of Calvin in the archives of the republic is dated Sept. 1536, where he is named *iste Gallus*. Senebier.

‡ Not professor, there was no Academy yet.

§ Régistres du 13 Fév. 1537. "On donne six écus au soleil à Cauvin soit Calvin, vu qu'il n'a encore guères reçu."—Picot, t. iii. p. 413.

We have some notice of him in a letter\* written shortly after his arrival, and directed to Daniel, from Lausanne, whither he had gone in order to be present at a disputation. He says, among other things, that he had been detained some days by the brethren at Geneva, whither they had made him promise to return; that he had accompanied a relation to Basel, and displeased all the churches because he would nowhere remain fixed. It was therefore by the mysterious decree of God that he became permanently settled at Geneva, the situation of which was so favorable to the diffusion of the Gospel. He wrote to Bullinger in 1549:† “If I cared about my life, or my personal interests, I should speedily leave this city; but when I consider the importance of this little corner, in that which regards the extension of the kingdom of God, I am justly full of anxiety for its welfare; and even your own advantage and tranquillity depend in some measure upon it.”

Calvin was united, from this period, in the closest and most intimate friendship with Farel and Viret, so that they formed a holy triumvirate, acting with one mind against the power of Antichrist. We may here refer to a writing which enables us to obtain a glance at the reformer's mind, which was very susceptible of friendship, though less so of love. It stands at the beginning of his Commentary on the Epistle to Titus, with whom he compares himself.‡ “As the condition of my charge resembles that which St. Paul committed to Titus, it seemed to me that it was you above all others to whom I ought to dedicate this my labor. It will at least afford those of our own times, and perhaps even those who come after us, some indication of our friendship and holy communion. There never have been, I think, two friends who have lived together in such friendship, in the common intercourse of the world, as we have in our ministry. I have exercised the office of a pastor here with you two, and with such an entire freedom from any appearance of envy that you and I appeared but as one. We have since been separated: you, Mr. William Farel, have been called by the church of Neufchatel, which you delivered from the tyranny of the papacy and conquered for Christ; and the church of Lausanne holds you, Mr. Pierre Viret, in a similar

\* MSS. Tigur. 13 Oct. 1536.

† MSS. Genev. Nonis Maiis 1549.

‡ “Genève, 29 Nov. 1549. Jean Calvin a deux excellents serviteurs de Dieu, Mr. Guillaume Farel, et Mr. Pierre Viret, ses frères bien aimés, et compagnons en l'œuvre de N. S. salut.”

office. But we each so keep the place committed to us, that by our union the children of God hasten to join the flock of Christ, and to be united in his body."

This intimate friendship continued uninterrupted till death. While Calvin was lying in his last sickness,\* Farel wrote to one of his friends, and brought to recollection the time when he first saw Calvin in Geneva. "I have not yet heard any certain account of the departure of our brother Calvin, so dear and so necessary to us, but the reports abroad and the state in which I left him afflict me greatly. Oh that I could be put in his place, and that he might be long spared to us in health and strength, to serve the churches of our Lord, who, blessed and praised be his name! caused me to meet with him where I little expected it, and retained him against his own purpose at Geneva, to employ him there in his service; and ordered other things in a most wonderful manner, and, strange to say, by my instrumentality, for I pressed him to undertake affairs harder than death. And sometimes he besought me in the name of God to have pity on him, and to let him serve God ardently in the way in which he had been always employed. But seeing that what I demanded was according to the will of God, he did violence to himself, and has accomplished more, and more rapidly, than any one else, and has surpassed not only others, but himself also. Oh how glorious a course has he run! God grant that we may run as he has, according to the grace given us!"

This Farel, although then an old man of eighty, would not rest, but went on foot from Neufchatel to Geneva in order to embrace his dying friend, though Calvin had already written him the following lines:†—

"Farewell, my excellent and pious brother! Since it is the will of the Lord that you should survive me in this world, never forget our friendship, the fruits of which, as it has proved a blessing to the church of God, will remain for us in heaven. I hope you will not be troubled on my account; my breath is weak, and I continually expect the last moment. I am contented that I live and die in Christ, who is gain to his people, both in life and death. Still once more farewell! and with the brethren."

\* Drelincourt, p. 299.

† Ep. 344. Gen. 2 Mai, 1564. Ed. Ams. t. 9, p. 172.



I have here described the beginning and the end of his labors, his first and his last feelings. We thus become acquainted not only with the tenderness of his disposition, but also learn how the church of God lay at the root of all his thoughts. He contemplated his friendships even, as we see by his last letter, only from that point of view in which they could be regarded as profitable to the church. So also we see with what repugnance he remained at Geneva, and how it was only in obedience to the suggestion of the divine Spirit. It was thus that Luther and Melancthon were continually urged forward against their own will, and knew not at the beginning where their course would end.

The friendship of Farel and Calvin is so much the more remarkable, as they were so little similar in disposition. An unlimited confidence united the one to the other. Calvin, by nature weak, became strong by conflict; Farel, on the other hand, endowed with much personal courage, knew no danger and was always in advance. Calvin, a deep thinker and a scholar, lived much within himself; Farel was a man who delighted in constant activity, a true Frenchman, lively in his speech, with a good voice, but not handsome in his appearance,\* and was little of an author. Calvin was cautious; Farel was precipitate, always venturing like a true reformer, often without thinking of consequences, to hasten forward. He was therefore constantly in danger; wherever he went, he was stoned, insulted, and scourged; but these things never hindered his progress. This his devoted religious courage always rendered him, as we shall see, honorable in the eyes of Calvin. Farel's decision or objections weighed with him as of the highest religious importance. He had even a good opinion of his learning as a professor, and considered that he would become a skilful and a faithful interpreter of Scripture aided as he was by his knowledge of Hebrew and his popular style.† The judgment which he formed of his literary merit appears

\* Farel's appearance, according to the *Chroniqueur* N. 9, p. 79,—“Petit, de pauvre apparence, la figure commune, le front étroit, le teint pâle et brûlé par le soleil, au menton deux ou trois touffes d'une barbe rousse et mal peignée, l'œil de feu, la bouche parlante, tel étoit l'homme qui venoit prendre possession des rues et des places de Neufchâtel.” His writings are,—1. The theses delivered at Basel. 2. Le sommaire de la religion Chrét. 3. De Orat. Domin. 4. The Conference with Guy Furbity. 5. Epit. au Duc de Lorraine. 6. Réponse à Caroli. 7. Traité du Purgatoire. 8. Le Glaive. 9. Traité de la Cène. 10. Le Vrai Usage de la Croix.

† Ep. MSS. Gen. To Viret, Aug. 9, 1546.

from the following observations, in which he exercises a very gentle style of criticism :\*—"I have not written anything respecting your work: this I have left altogether to Viret. I have said at the beginning what is true; that is, I cannot trust to my own judgment in criticizing your works, our style of writing is so different. You know my reverence for Augustine, yet I do not conceal that his prolixity displeases me: my own conciseness however may be too stiff: but I will not now contend as to which is the better; I only fear that the great diffuseness may obscure the lights which I otherwise see in the work. One expects only what is excellent from you. This is not displeasing to me. I speak without flattery: your book pertains to that class of productions; but I should be glad if the style had been so managed as to entice by its agreeableness, while it afforded that instruction in wisdom which lies hid under that covering of which I have spoken."

Peter Viret was a man of considerable talent; he was born at Orbe in 1511, and studied at Paris, where he became acquainted with Farel, and soon appeared in Switzerland as a reformer. The deputies of Bern took him to Geneva as a fellow-laborer; he contended with Farel against Fürbity. Having subsequently left Geneva, Farel recalled him in 1536, but he was soon after invited to Lausanne, where he was invested with the first pastoral appointment. When Calvin in after-times was recalled to Geneva, which he had left, and could not obey the call, he besought the council to put Viret in his place. The Bernese allowed it only for a very short time. He remained in Lausanne till 1558. Oppressed and accused on the subject of discipline, he came to Geneva, and there found rest and consolation. Some time after this he went to the south of France on account of his health. The church at Nismes chose him as its pastor. In 1563 he was elected to that of Lyons, where he also became president of the synod. He afterwards went to Orthez, the residence of the queen of Navarre, where he died in 1571 as professor of theology. He wrote a good deal under the name of Firmianus Chlorus; among other things, *Commentaire sur l'Ev. de N. S. selon St. Jehan*: fol. Gen. M. Robert Etienne, 1553;† but his works are very rarely to be met with.

Beza says,‡ "Calvin greatly delighted in that intimate friend-

\* Ep. MSS. Gen. Cal. Sept. 1549.

† Senebier. Gen. Lit. T. i. p. 156.

‡ Calvini Vita, a. 1541.

ship which he enjoyed with Farel and Viret,—a friendship hateful to the evil-minded, but most gratifying to the good. And it was indeed a fair sight to contemplate these three extraordinary men, endowed with such various gifts, laboring in perfect union together to accomplish this heavenly design. Farel was conspicuous through greatness of soul, and a certain heroic nature; no one could remain unmoved by the thunder of his eloquence, or listen to his fervent prayers without feeling raised towards heaven. Viret, on the contrary, spoke with such exquisite sweetness, that his hearers hung irresistibly on his lips. But as to Calvin, as many as were the words which he uttered, so many were the deep thoughts which filled the breasts of his hearers: so that it has often entered my mind, that in the union of the gifts enjoyed by these three, we see that which would constitute the highest perfection of an evangelical teacher.”

With the three friends thus described, Beza himself became united in after-times in still closer intimacy.

Theodore Beza, though of a milder and softer nature, and different in his temperament from Calvin, was one with him in heart, soul, and thought. Beza was confessedly a truly great man, both in heart and genius; and by his skilful exertions, his firm faith, his urgent, sometimes severe zeal, and entire devotion to the things of the Lord, he gained a large share of influence. As a man of feeling, distinguished in his youth for poetical ability,\* which in his old age, changed as he was, still furnished him with amusement; accomplished in the ways of the world, and possessing an agreeable person, he was always acceptable to the great. We may in many respects call him Calvin's Melancthon. He took a more tranquil course than his master; his disposition was so mild and loving, that it was a common saying in Geneva, where Calvin's strong bridle frightened men, “It were better to be with Beza in hell than with Calvin in heaven.”

But the union of soul which existed between Calvin and Beza was never disturbed. Beza honored his friend so entirely, that he not only thought with him, and wrote for him, but even neglected his own duties to work for him, and to explain his doctrines, which he did with a force and an enthusiasm which well prove the unwonted friendship with which he clung to his master, whom he loved rather to call his father. He

\* He misused this faculty in his early days, and thereby gave occasion to many bitter remarks on the part of his enemies, not yet forgotten.

attended him on his death-bed to the last moment. Calvin bequeathed him his store of manuscripts, as Beza himself informs us. After his friend's decease he wrote an account of his life, and defended him against his various enemies with an earnestness which cannot but move the heart. Thus Calvin enjoyed the rare felicity of being confident that he left his works in the hands of a friend, who would not fail to uphold the principles of his system; in this respect more fortunate, perhaps greater, than Luther, with whom in the end, even Melancthon himself in some things disagreed. How much this noble union says for Calvin, and in what light it sets him, needs no explanation; were he known only through his friendship with these three excellent men; were all other records of his life lost, he would yet excite love and admiration.

We might wonder how it was that a man so firm, even to sternness, in his opinions, and inclined to sudden anger, could enjoy the happiness of such a friendship. But this shows that in his private relations portions of his character were unfolded which only rarely appeared in his public life: among these were a soul-felt trust in, and inward affection for, his friends. His whole conduct awakens the highest admiration; it was one continued exercise of resignation, without any reference to self. If ever carried beyond the bounds of moderation, it was only by the force of his keen and severe conscience, and this failing was easily pardoned by those who knew him best.

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## CHAPTER IX.

CALVIN'S FIRST STRUGGLE IN GENEVA.—THE YEAR 1537.—  
ADDRESS OF THE GENEVESE CONSISTORY TO THE PREACHERS OF ZURICH.—THE GENEVESE PREACHERS TO THOSE OF BERN.—CALVIN TO BULLINGER AND OTHERS.

CALVIN was received in Geneva with enthusiasm. It is related that, after his first sermon, the people flocked in crowds to his residence to testify their delight, and he was obliged to promise those who had not been able to hear him on this occasion to preach again on the following day.



Farel's first experiments in discipline had proved very distasteful.\* Among the things forbidden were games of chance, swearing, slandering, dancing, the singing of idle songs, and masquerading. The people were commanded to attend church, to keep Sunday strict, and to be at home by nine o'clock in the evening. These laws were proclaimed with the sound of a trumpet, and with threats of severe punishment against transgressors. Four preachers and two deacons were appointed, and a school was established. Antony Saunier was chosen director. Farel published a short formulary of belief, consisting of twenty-one articles, and was probably associated in this with Calvin, who published a catechism in French.

Calvin subsequently translated this first Genevese catechism into Latin, with the title, 'Catechismus, sive Christianæ relig. institutio, communibus renatæ nuper in evangelio Genevensis ecclesiæ suffragiis recepta, et vulgari quidem prius idiomate nunc vero Latine etiam, quo de fidei illius synceritate passim aliis etiam ecclesiis constet, in lucem edita. Joanne Calvino autore.' At the end are the words, 'Basileæ in officina Roberti Winter. An. 1538, mense martio.'

Calvin names himself as the author of this catechism. It was therefore, probably, entirely his own work in its original form. But this catechism, and Farel's confession *exscripta e catechismo*, as it is called, are now found printed together. And further, this first catechism, which is among the rarest of books, is not the little, well-known Geneva catechism for children, in question and answer; but a larger catechism, intended for grown people, not in question and answer; or rather, it is an analysis of the 'Institutes,' in which he passes from the law to faith, and not as in the catechism from faith to the law.

The author relates in his preface to the work, that he was laboring to induce the senate to acknowledge this catechism publicly, seeing that it would be effecting a great good by thus setting an example to the people in so holy a thing. "And we easily succeeded in obtaining that the citizens should be summoned by tens, and swear to adopt this confession; which was also done with much satisfaction."

This occurrence may be regarded as the foundation of that theocratic government afterwards established. The citizens swore as citizens to observe the confession; and he who opposed,

\* Ruchat. T. v. p. 588.

or did aught against it, subjected himself to both civil and ecclesiastical punishment. Those who would not adopt the confession, lost their rights as citizens.

The first public acknowledgment of the reformation took place before the arrival of Calvin, in the August of 1535; and again, with more solemnity, but still before Calvin arrived, on the 21st of May, 1536. The second was made in the presence of the council of two hundred, on the 20th of November, the same year, and when the above-mentioned confession, drawn up by Farel and Calvin, was laid before it. A third took place before the council and the assembled people, July 20,\* 1537. This, of which Calvin and Beza speak, seems to have been the most solemn of all. In the month of September Calvin was present at a disputation against the Roman catholics in Lausanne; but at which he did not, as Senebier says, preside. Farel, on the other hand, shone forth conspicuously by his eloquence, and the presence of the Spirit. Calvin spoke very little, but he argued so convincingly on the subject of the Lord's Supper that a friar was converted on the spot. Hereupon the Bernese introduced the reformation into the Pays de Vaud, against the will of Charles V. Calvin wrote to his friend Daniel on his way to Lausanne, Oct. 3 (13), 1536.†

"The idols and altars have already disappeared from many places, and the rest, I hope, will soon be purified. God grant that idolatry may be banished from all hearts! . . . . If however those slow bellies, who are so pleasantly prattling with you in the shade, had as much courage as they have good words, they would hasten to us in order to share the labor. Incredibly small is the number of preachers in comparison with that of the churches which need them. Glad however should I be, were there some men among those with you, who, seeing the necessity of the church, would come to our help."

At the beginning of November, 1536, Calvin received a letter from Bucer, who even at that early period, it seems, discovered his lofty spirit and his fitness to restore union. The confidence, clearness, and moderation with which he entered upon his work had established his reputation in France and Germany. Thus Bucer speaks of him as occupying a very exalted position, expresses his willingness to be taught by him, and invites him in the most respectful manner to a mutual good understanding on

\* According to Senebier, it took place on the 29th.

† MSS. Tig

certain points in dispute. The Lord had chosen him, he adds, to be of great service to the church. To him it would belong to establish union. He then particularly cites the example of Paul, who regarded holy conversation as a blessed means of promoting concord, and journeyed over sea and land to unite the churches by a frequent coming together. It was left to Calvin to appoint the place where a meeting might be held,—Basel, Bern, or, if it must be, Geneva,—“that we may examine the truths in which you indeed stand fast, but of which we, on account of our weakness, require some explanation.” This shows what his position already was.\*

Thus passed away that eventful, never-to-be-forgotten year (1536). We now enter upon that which followed. Its commencement was propitious; but Calvin, speaking of this period of his life, says, “Scarcely were four months passed, when we were assailed, on the one side by the Anabaptists, and on the other by a scandalous apostate, who, secretly supported by some persons of rank, gave us much to do. Thus one thing followed upon another, and drove us to and fro. Weak and timid, as I must confess myself to be, I saw the necessity of learning, at the very beginning, to struggle with these stormy waves; and although I did not yield to them, yet I did not possess sufficient magnanimity to feel otherwise than rejoiced, more even than I ought to have felt, when the popular tempest drove me from the city.”

Beza thus expresses himself respecting that period:—“The devil strove to destroy this church at the beginning, but God would not let him. Calvin, with some of his associates, conquered the anabaptists in a public disputation. This was done by the power of the divine Word, and in the presence of the council and the people; so that the anabaptists dare no longer show themselves in the city.” (18 March, 1537.)

The other conflict in which he was engaged affected him more deeply. He found himself obliged, with Farel and Viret, to defend his orthodoxy against a certain person named Caroli. This dangerous, vain and insufferable man would have been unworthy of notice, had he not had the honor to excite Calvin's indignation. Full of hypocrisy, he read and preached the Word of God in Paris, where Farel was well acquainted with his immoral life. Being accused as a heretic, because that he in some measure

\* Ep. 3. Ed. Laus. Ed. Amst. T. ix. p. 2.

taught the truth, he recanted and persecuted the reformed. Again attaching himself to the protestants he came to Geneva. In Basel he played the part of a hypocrite. At Neufchatel he married; and being subsequently appointed pastor at Lausanne, he used his utmost efforts to weaken the influence of Farel and Viret, who accused him of immorality. In his sermons he upheld the doctrine of purgatory, and the practice of praying for the dead. His principles were treated with contempt, and he soon after accused the whole of the Genevese preachers of Arianism. The affair was at first confined to Lausanne; but the accused desired a synod to be held in Bern. This was done, and the following extracts from three letters on the subject will be read with interest.

“The Genevese Consistory to the preachers at Zurich :—

“Grace and peace from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Honored brethren ! when Caroli first excited those disturbances the noise of which has shaken all the churches of Germany, we hoped, as they arose from mere slanderous reports, that they would soon be suppressed. But to prevent the slightest doubt from remaining in the minds of pious men, we spared no pains to prove our innocence to the neighboring churches. Grynæus has no doubt sent you, as we requested him, a copy of our confession : from this it will easily be seen with how little justice we have been attacked by this foolish man.”

Here follows a defence against the suspicions of those who might still doubt the orthodoxy of the accused party. After which they proceed :—

“Nothing now remained for him but to object to us that we stubbornly suppressed the words *Trinity* and *Person*, and represented the divine nature of Christ as derived from himself. Had he obtained what he wished, the object which we have sought through our ministry would have been absolutely ruined. . . . We have accordingly prepared a new form of confession.”

Now follows their defence on the subject of the Logos :—“He has heaped abuse on all who will not allow that we can help the dead by our prayers. . . . Viret, his colleague, to prevent the kindling of a fire, proceeded as if nothing had happened, in the presence of the congregation. Calvin, whom we sent thither, was accused of Arianism.\* He replied that his works\* would afford ample proof of his innocence in this respect. But not to

\* Alluding probably to the ‘Institutes.’



leave Farel, he quoted the passage in the catechism of our church, in which the divine glory and existence of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are distinctly spoken of."

The Genevese preachers next addressed themselves to those of Bern, and related how Caroli had accused Viret at Lausanne, first of creating disorder, and then of Arianism. "We have sent Calvin to Viret," they continue. "He recited our confession to Caroli. When the latter answered, that we were not to employ ourselves in making new creeds, but to subscribe the three ancient symbols, Calvin rejoined, that we had sworn to the belief in one God, and not to the creed of Athanasius, whose symbol a true church would never have admitted. Your deputies therefore had no resource but to summon a synod."

Calvin, in a letter to Bullinger, or some other preacher at Bern, mentions how Caroli had accused them all before the synod in that city. "But," he adds, "I immediately rose, and showed the confession taken from our catechism, which is appended to the letters addressed to you. This however did not quiet him, and he insisted that we should continue suspected till we signed the Athanasian symbol. I answered, that I was not accustomed to take anything for the Word of God till I had properly considered it. See now the rage of this beast! 'Such an answer,' he exclaimed with tragical gesticulation, 'is unworthy of a Christian.' A general synod is proposed, in which the affair may be examined. There is great danger for the church when simple men see us thus quarrelling with each other. Something worse will follow. People are already beginning to designate as deceivers those who refuse to pray for the dead. The heathen already cry, that we ought at least to be agreed among ourselves, before we expect to convert others to our faith. Thus you see what may be expected from such examples. The stain which this devilish deceiver has stamped upon us must assuredly be no longer suffered to remain, unless the very Gospel itself is to be exposed to the mockery of the impious. Be careful therefore to assemble all the French preachers of your district in a synod, if possible before Easter, for much has still to be said."

The synod referred to was held with great solemnity. There were present a hundred ministers from Bern, twenty from Neuchâtel, and three from Geneva. Those from Geneva preserved a deep silence till the end of the proceedings. Then Calvin came forward, gave an admirable account of his faith, and accused

Caroli, adding, "that he had no more faith than a dog or a pig." The Genevese drew up their confession without employing either the word *Trinity* or *Person*.

Caroli, on the other hand, insisted upon subscription to the three ancient creeds,—the Nicene, the Athanasian and the Apostles'. This the Genevese refused to give, that they might not by their example introduce a species of tyranny into the church, which would expose every one to the charge of heresy who would not speak in the words or according to the will of another. Hereupon the synod pronounced the confession of the Genevese on the Trinity and Sacraments "*sancta et catholica*."

Caroli was deprived of his office and banished. He made his peace with the evangelical party while Calvin was in Strasburg, but again separated himself. At last he went to Rome, and was re-admitted into the catholic church. He accused Farel as the chief of all heretics.

The slander propagated by Caroli excited distrust both in Switzerland and Germany against the orthodoxy of the Genevese: it was desired that the words *Trinity* and *Person* should be used. An arrangement being entered into, it was resolved that these words should be employed as a test. A *Confessio Fidei de Eucharistia* was introduced at the same time. The people of Strasburg were called upon to sign this formulary, in order to prove that they did not differ from the Swiss. The local presence of Christ in the Sacrament is altogether denied, and a spiritual participation of the mystery is represented as the bond of our union with the Lord. But the Strasburgers rejected the idea of the sacrament being a mere commemoration, and spoke of a true communion of the blood and of the body.

In consequence of this struggle, the Genevese became more closely united with the people of Zurich, who approved of their confession and testified their general esteem. Calvin subsequently grew more and more attached to the reformers of Zurich. In a letter which he wrote to Grynæus from Bern we see plainly how much this first attack upon his orthodoxy disturbed him. His adversary accused him of Arianism and Sabellianism. He here says, "Conscriptus aliquanto ante catechismus a nobis fuerat, Gallice etiam editus, ubi sub una essentia nos Patrem, Filium et Spiritum Sanctum complecti testabamur. But that this man, a mere nothing, could by his vanity induce so many churches to think ill of my doctrine, distresses me greatly. I am so much the more annoyed, because it never entered my mind

that I should have to defend myself against such a charge." He thus angrily speaks of Caroli :—" That sycophant has been banished by a decree of the senate, and we are acquitted, not only of all guilt, but of all suspicion. Although therefore he is now boasting of the name of Athanasius, as if he were suffering for the defence of the truth, the world is in no danger of finding an Athanasius in this church-robber, whoremonger and murderer, dripping as he is with the blood of many saints. While I thus describe him, I say nothing but what I should be ready to prove through competent witnesses."

Calvin's friends Grynæus and Capito endeavored to tranquilize him. The former feared that the church, still weak, would suffer much from these agitations, and that distrust would gain ground among the brethren. Farel, as we learn from the following passage out of a letter from Calvin to Viret, for once lost his courage in this vexatious state of affairs :—" We must have you in Geneva again, if we lose Farel, who is more depressed than I had expected to see a man of his iron breast."

As an apology for his creed, Calvin issued the Genevese catechism in Latin, that all might be able to read it. He complains greatly in the preface that the slanders against him had gained such ground :—" Nulla innocentia, nulla simplicitas a suspicionibus satis tuta." His whole existence was troubled through an attack on the belief which was the very ground of his life. That he did not altogether and simply appeal to his *Institutes*, may be attributed to his friendship for Farel and Viret, who were accused with him. He would refer to that only which they had published in common, and was noble enough wholly to forget in this respect his own work.

To this period (1537) may be ascribed the publication of two of his smaller writings; the one, 'De Fugienda Idolatria,' dedicated to Nicol. du Chémin, and in which he confutes the erroneous notion of the faithful in France, "that one might embrace the truth, and yet hear the mass." The other, dedicated to Gerard Rufus (Roux), 'De Papisticis Sacerdotiis vel administrandis vel abjiciendis,' in which he shows how the Christian ought to view the catholic benefices and places of profit and honor, and speaks with impressive energy on the duties of the clergy. In the first place, he forcibly shows how deserving of punishment it is, when Christians act with hypocrisy in order to escape persecution, and think that they may be present at the mass, if they only in their own minds are convinced of the truth of the Gospel and of

the falsehood of the popish doctrine. The curse of God, he proves, rests upon the despiser of conscience. Let us hear his own words:—"We shall do well to remember what St. Augustine relates in some place of St. Cyprian. After he had been condemned to be beheaded, he was offered his life on condition that he would merely by word renounce the religion for which he was about to die. Not only was this offer made him, but when he arrived at the place of punishment, he was affectionately entreated by the governor to consider, whether he would not rather save his life than suffer the punishment of a rash and useless obstinacy. To this he briefly answered, 'That in a matter so solemn there was no room for deliberation.' When the instruments of death were placed before his eyes, and the executioner with a wicked and ferocious side-glance drew him forward, and when the edge of the sword was on his neck, and the raging crowds were pouring forth their horrible maledictions, if any one should feel astonished that the holy martyr did not at that moment lose his courage, but offered himself joyfully to the torment, let him recollect that his resolution was thus nobly sustained to the last by the one single thought, that his heart was fixed on the commandment of God, who now called him to make profession of his religion."

"Evil springs from disobedience, as soon as we allow ourselves to calculate and reason on God's commands. It is not lawful to subject to our deliberations that which has been once decreed."

"Outward confession is necessary, because Christ has said, 'He who is ashamed of me, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed.' True piety engenders a true confession; and we must not regard that which St. Paul says as a light and trivial thing,—'With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.'

"Many believe in him, but confess him not. O damnable desire of honor!

"Not every one is called to come forward in defence of the truth, but chiefly the teachers of the Word. How the Christian ought to conduct himself when placed among unbelievers,—when he ought to speak of his convictions,—this must be determined by the voice of his own conscience. No fixed rules can be given for his conduct in such circumstances."

But he shows what kind of foresight ought to be used. Among other things he proves, that the holy Scriptures forbid praying



to pictures and images ; that the distinction of meats is not necessary ; that the law of celibacy is tyrannical. He allows however that there are indifferent ceremonies, to be present at which does no harm to the conscience. But he particularly excepts from such, anointing with oil, giving money for absolution, the use of consecrated water, and the mass, which breaks the cross of Christ and destroys the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He adds : "The people with whom you mingle, and whose religion you pretend to be assisting in these things, believe that all they do is holy. When the juggling priest has, step by step, approached the altar, he begins to perform his part, moving sometimes on one side and sometimes on another. Sometimes he remains motionless ; then he mutters his magic syllables, by which he seems to expect to draw Christ down from heaven, and wishes others to think the same. . . . After having descended from heaven, he offers to effect the reconciliation of God and man, as if he were substituted in the place of Christ, dead and buried."

"We may visit churches ; we may view and admire pictures. But he who is present at the mass, commits a sin, even though his heart be rightly disposed ; for he deceives, and meek Christians are led astray and injured by the example. Our enemies regard a man's being present at the mass as a sign of his conversion. Eleazer, the Maccabee, and the mother of the seven sons, afford us an example of the hatred we should have to hypocrisy. Commandments, both great and small, must be obeyed. Naaman, who received permission from Elisha to go with his king into the idol's temple, can no more be brought forward as an excuse than Jeremiah or Paul. The wish to avoid vexation and disturbance is also an untenable excuse. Nothing superstitious must be suffered in families. A man must not marry a woman who thinks or believes otherwise. I do not say that you must go forth to the world, but you must guard yourselves against sin ; this is not my sentiment merely ; all the holy martyrs have proved it. Do not say, ' You may indeed speak thus, for you are safe : were you in our place you would speak very differently.' God truly would give me courage to brave all dangers were I with you."

As in the first work he sharpens the conscience, borne down by catholic influences, against hypocrisy, so in the second he lays hold of those passions which exercised most power in the catholic church, that is, avarice and ambition. Thus these two

little writings were calculated in the highest degree at that period to operate against the catholic, and to edify the evangelical, church.

"J. Calvin to his former friend, and now bishop. Every one calls you happy, and the very favorite of fortune, because of the new dignity of bishop to which you have attained. For, besides the honorable title of *Prelate*, the majesty of which is everywhere revered, it brings you a large revenue in tithes, from which you will be able not only to support your establishment, but also to minister to the poverty of many, and to exercise liberality towards others. You see what men say of you, and perhaps will lead you to believe. But, for myself, when I reflect how little all these things are worth, for which men commonly entertain so high a regard, I greatly pity your calamity. We must first consider what he who established bishops says respecting them.\* The Lord designates those whom he appoints pastors of his church, as guards and watchmen of his people. They are called the salt of the earth, the light of the world, angels or messengers of God, fellow-workers with God; preaching is called the virtue and the power of God."

As a contrast to that of wicked pastors, he draws the picture of a faithful shepherd: "It is the duty of pastors to teach. If you have either to admonish or to exhort, it is your duty to proceed with simple affection, with a gentleness and solicitude like that which the peasant shows towards his flocks."

Neither catholic nor protestant minister can read without fear and trembling that which he addresses so powerfully to the conscience, on the punishment of the wicked pastor: "Answer me conscientiously, you superintendent and chief in the affairs of religion, with what fidelity do you labor to restore that which is decayed?"

On the position of the papacy he thus speaks: "It is not unlike a city, assailed within by a dreadful pestilence, and without by besieging enemies, so that it cannot fail to perish on the one side or the other. Sound the trumpet, you who are appointed to keep watch: arm yourselves, hasten, without delay. What look you for? On what are you dreaming? Is it a time to sleep? Unhappy man, you who are about to give an account for the death of so many sufferers before the Lord! You so many times a homicide! so many times guilty of blood, of which there is

\* Every word which follows is calculated to inspire ministers with reverence for their office.

not a drop which the Lord will not demand at your hands! Yet horribly as you are stricken with his lightning, you are not moved, you feel no fear! . . . . But I even treat you mildly when I call you homicide and traitor. . . . Behold a more awful crime; one more dreadful than all others; it is, that you every day sell and crucify as far as in you lies the Son of God afresh."

Against the great revenues received, he says, "It is an evident trickery and cheat; it is the boldest fraud that can be practised, that he who has never put his hand to the work should come and demand payment. Far from their churches, all the year, themselves, they have their vicars, who are petty robbers and brigands, through whom they commit every kind of rapine, extortion, pillage, and robbery. And yet your great brigand has not been ashamed to introduce that humble saying of St. Jerome into his tyrannical decrees, namely, that the goods of the church are the goods of the poor, from which he who takes more than is necessary to the support of an honest and sober life is guilty of robbing the poor."

From this excellent little work we see how justly Beza, in his preface to the 'Opusculæ' addressed to the duchess of Ferrara, said of Calvin: "Among other excellent virtues which the Lord had so liberally bestowed on this holy man, he had these two remarkable ones in disputation; that is, a marvellous dexterity of mind to seize at once upon the knotty point in the argument, and ability to develop it. Together with this, he had such integrity of conscience, that, avoiding all vain and sophistical subtleties and all ambitious display, he never sought anything else but the simple and pure truth."

The situation of the reformed church in France during this year was disturbed in the highest degree. Hence the works above described were well calculated to prepare the faithful for martyrdom, and to warn them against falling away. France persevered in its system of persecution, partly from fanaticism and partly from policy, in order to justify her orthodoxy. In a letter to the preachers of Basel, dated from Geneva, Nov. 13, 1537, it is said: "We would announce to you in few words why we send these messengers. Our enemies have very lately made our poor brethren at Nismes feel their rage when we least expected it. The senate of Strasburg and Basel had commended to Count William's care all those who were languishing in the prisons of France on account of their faith. It is said that the king listened to his representations. We were comforting ourselves with the

hope thus excited, when the fire broke out horribly again. Two believers were condemned to the flames. The messenger will give you an account of their death, if he can make himself understood in Latin. Many have been cast into prison, and their lives are in imminent danger, if the rage of the persecution be not repressed, drunken as they are with the blood of the two who have perished. Both the martyrs exhibited a noble constancy to the last breath, tried as their fortitude was with the most refined cruelty. But are we sure that the rest will manifest similar resolution? Let us then afford help, that the weak may not be overwhelmed with alarm. Let us take care not to regard the blood of the saints as of little worth,—that blood which is precious in the sight of God. . . . . Your friends have concluded a treaty with the king, the main subject of which is religion; namely, that those who profess the same doctrines as you hold shall not be persecuted any more. If such be the case, let us avail ourselves of this circumstance to help our brethren, which Christ not only distinctly commands us to do, but admonishes us that to forsake the brethren is to forsake him."

We learn from a letter to Bucer, dated January 12, 1538, that Calvin, amid all these movements in Geneva, sometimes employed his attention on Germany. In the writing referred to, he complains of Luther's untractable nature, guards himself against his doctrine of the Lord's Supper, and speaks with a force and decision which plainly indicate that he never inclined to the opinions of the Lutherans. It is not clear what gave rise to this complaint, since Luther, in 1537, directed a friendly address to the burgomaster of Basel, and a very conciliatory one also, dated Dec. 1st of the same year, to the reformed Swiss cantons, congratulating them on the concord to which they had attained.

But the Swiss were not satisfied, for he had said nothing respecting the confession of Basel. Bucer himself had also incurred especial blame: it was known that he had secretly written to Luther, that he had spoken in his letter most unwarrantably of the Swiss, had flattered Luther, and stated that they now believed Christ to be substantially present in the eucharist. This occasioned much agitation, and Bucer lost more and more the respect which he had enjoyed. Calvin's object in writing was to warn him on this matter. We discover his affection for him in all that he says,—his free, open nature, and his desire for union, as far as it could be obtained by lawful means. He complains, in the first instance, of his own suffer-



ings, and pours his sorrows into Bucer's bosom. The disturbances at Geneva were commenced. He thus alludes to some formulary of faith, probably that of the Genevese, and observes, "If Luther will embrace us with this as brothers, nothing will afford me greater joy; but he is not the only one to be considered in the church. We are cruel and barbarous, if we have no regard to the thousands who will be horribly scandalized under the pretence of union. I can scarcely tell what I ought to think of Luther, entertaining as I do the highest opinion of his piety." He accuses him of obstinacy and ambition. "Nothing will be holy so long as this mad love of strife excites us. . . . The past must all be forgotten. . . . He sins not only by his boasting and insulting language, but through ignorance and the grossest trifling. For what a string of absurdities he cast about our necks at the beginning, when he said, 'The bread is the body itself!' If he meant that the body of Christ was inclosed in the bread, he fell, I think, into the most contemptible of errors. What do other supporters of this notion say? Do they not employ expressions worse even than those of Marcion? If therefore you can exercise any influence on Martin, either through favor or respect, endeavor that he may subject to Christ, not to himself, those with whom he has carried on this most unhappy strife, and that he subject himself to the truth."

Calvin now passes on to Bucer, and freely accuses him of self-flattery and indulgence in the efforts which he made to apologize for Zwingli and himself,—expressions referring principally to the letter mentioned above, which Bucer had addressed to Luther:—"Would that on my head all this distress and misery had fallen,—upon me who feel convinced in my conscience that I have never been forsaken by God, from the first moment when I learned to understand his word, so as to mistake the right use of the sacrament, and what is meant by partaking of the body of Christ!"

Bucer was obliged to undertake the difficult character of a mediator:—"If you wish the Swiss to lay down their pertinacity, desire the Lutherans in turn to cease from bearing themselves so imperiously." At the end of the letter the writer again speaks of Bucer with great friendship and earnestness, and in the name of his associates: "If you persevere in pressing the points now in controversy, without offending any one, you do so, we believe, with the best of motives, but this mode of proceeding becomes every day more dangerous." Calvin, so great a lover

of truth, excellently adds, "I know well what you will answer; but 'Si vis omnibus Christum plausibilem facere, tibi non esse fabricandum Evangelium;' and you seem just now to be endeavoring to establish a middle kingdom between the pope and Christ."

In the course of the letter he complains greatly that Megander (Grossmann) had been sent to Bern. Bucer had of his own will altered a catechism issued by Grossmann and used in the country. In the article on the eucharist, the expression used by Zwingli was suppressed, and the latter was carried so far before the senate that the clergy were required to subscribe the new primer. Grossmann hesitated, and was banished. Calvin showed Bucer the folly of this experiment, and charged him with the chief part of the guilt:—"How do our enemies triumph and laugh, as they see us thus wounding each other in the presence of powerful and armed opponents!"

But a storm was rising, to which Calvin himself was obliged to yield, and at the approach of which he had the first opportunity of exhibiting that steadfastness of will which had its origin in the power of conviction and in the force of conscience.

The first excitement of the reformation seemed allayed, and the little state was longing for tranquillity; but the impulse which had been given to men's minds rendered storms unavoidable.\* It was only a lip-revolution which had as yet taken place, and it required twenty years longer for the council and the better part of the citizens to obtain the victory over moral corruption and violence.† The ministers of religion desired a complete moral reformation. In order to meet their wishes, the council forbade many amusements which tended to corrupt the manners of the people. A tire-woman even was arrested in open day, because she had adorned a bride with too much luxury; the mother and two bridesmaids were subjected to the same punishment, for having assisted in dressing the bride and accompanying her to church.‡ A card-player was put in the pillory, with his pack of cards about his neck. A man guilty of adultery was sentenced to banishment for a year, and paraded through the city with the woman who shared his guilt by the common hangman. But the notions of morality were far from

\* Picot, t. i. p. 361, and Ruchat.

† Régistres de la Répub. 4 Sept. 1536. Some of the principal citizens and many others protested before the council, not being able to endure the ministers who re-proved their vices, *vouloir vivre en liberté*.

‡ Régistres de la Répub. 20 Mai, 1537.

being as yet so strict or well-defined as in our times. Thus we find that in the year 1537, a member of the syndic was found guilty of gross licentiousness, and in consequence was put into prison for three days, degraded from his office, and obliged to perform penance before the great council. But notwithstanding this, he was chosen six times successively to the office from which he had been expelled. Such was the influence exercised by the libertine party, which, joining with the independents, contended so obstinately against the authority of the government.

This state of things continued till the year 1538. The movement party regarded the preachers with mistrust, who threatened the openly profligate with excommunication, and severely reprobated their vices. Calvin sought the salvation of all these souls. A beautiful passage on the responsibility of ministers occurs in the preface to the catechism, published at Basel, 1538, and which may be cited in reference to this subject:—"Our duty is not finished when we have preached the Word. We must employ a far greater degree of diligence in the care of those whose blood will be required at our hands, if they perish through our negligence. When we were full of anxiety in this respect, it tortured and consumed us as often as we had celebrated the Lord's Supper; for while we were doubtful of the faith of many, or rather had the greatest reason to suspect it, yet all came without distinction to the sacrament; but doing so, they swallowed the wrath of God, instead of becoming partakers of the sacrament of life. We had no peace therefore in our conscience, till all who came to the sacrament solemnly confessed the name of Jesus."

In consequence of this, the council and people were called upon to swear to the confession. Calvin then replies to the accusation brought against him in Geneva, that the people were compelled to bind themselves by oath to observe the law, both by examples drawn from the Old Testament, and also by the doctrine of the catechism, which states, that, as we cannot perfectly obey the law, we must cast ourselves upon the mercy of Christ. He protests against all suspicion, and still further against too much anxiety on the subject of ceremonies, exhorting all parties to peace and union:—"Little will be said about ceremonies before the judgment-seat of God."

A party was now expressly formed in opposition to so stern a

\* "*Doctrinæ potius et animorum urgeamus unitatem quam ceremoniis conformandis morosius insistamus.*"

judge of morals. It demanded of the council the expulsion of this new popedom. To promote this object, the council was to adopt the resolutions of the Lausanne synod ; according to which certain festivals, as Christmas and Ascension day, were to be observed. For the same purpose, unleavened bread was to be used in the sacrament, and the baptismal font was still to be preserved. The preachers, who it was well known would not regard these things with complacency, suspecting a plot, prepared themselves accordingly for the most determined resistance.

It is not to be denied that Calvin and Farel may have gone too far in these proceedings ; while a third preacher, named Courad, whom they had brought from Paris, thundered vehemently against the unrighteousness of the decision. Calvin and Farel had mixed themselves up with the management of public affairs, according to their notions of a theocracy.\* They were forbidden to do so. Courad despised this prohibition. He was commanded to cease from preaching. Old and blind, but full of youthful zeal, he desired to be led to the pulpit, and, preaching as before, he compared the republic of Geneva to that of the frogs, and the Genevese themselves to rats who live hidden in the straw. He was apprehended and cast into prison, nor was the influence of his friends sufficient to procure his release. Calvin and Farel appeared before the council, and complained of the imprisonment of their associate. The council, on the other hand, delivered to them a paper, in which the Bernese expressed their desire that the Genevese would unite with them in the matter of ceremonies.

Passions of every kind were excited, and the first families lived in continual strife and discord. The city was torn by parties, and no conciliatory representations proved of any avail. Calvin, Farel and Courad therefore, moved by conscientious zeal, took the bold determination to declare that they could not administer the Supper of the Lord in a city which would not submit itself to any kind of church discipline.

The people were universally enraged. It was Easter Sunday. Farel preached in St. Jervais, and Calvin at the same time in St. Peter's, but without administering the sacrament. They stated their reasons, and defied the rage of their opponents, who had themselves drawn the sword. This resolution to refuse the sacrament is important as a matter of ecclesiastical history, because

\* Régist. 1538, 11 et 12 de Mars.



it is the origin of that whole system of church discipline which Calvin subsequently introduced, and which simply rests on the fundamental principle of excluding from church communion, or the Lord's Supper, those who, according to the judgment of the church, appear unworthy of the privilege; and secondly, on that of not allowing the church to be subject to the state in matters which concern religion. It must be allowed that the church at that period was far from being perfectly represented.

The syndics took advantage of these various circumstances to assemble the people, and, aided by their dependents, to expel our three faithful witnesses to the truth from the city. They were condemned to leave Geneva in three days. When the decision of the people was made known to Calvin, he replied with dignity, "Had I been the servant of man I should have received but poor wages; but happy for me it is that I am the servant of Him whom ever fails to give his servants that which He has promised them." In the protocol issued April 23, the words which Farel and Calvin uttered on this occasion are recorded to their honor: they must have inspired even their enemies with a feeling of respect:—"Let it be: it is better to serve God than man!"

Calvin and Farel had now to encounter many sufferings. They went first to Bern. There they made their complaint against Geneva. Messengers were sent to that city, but they accomplished nothing. A synod was at that time assembled at Zurich, for the purpose of determining in what manner the answer ought to be framed to Luther's kind but indefinite address. Calvin and Farel described the perilous condition of Geneva, and besought the friendly interference and protection of the synod. They had been repulsed with scorn. Not denying that they might have spoken with too much severity, or refusing to be advised, Calvin still insisted that it was not for the sake of a mere form that he had opposed himself to the council. They would consent to the use of fonts\* and unleavened bread, but the Bernese must break the bread as they did. Festival days also might be allowed, on condition that the people were permitted to work after the service of the church. But, on the other hand, some species of discipline must be introduced. There should be a division of parishes; excommunication was to be permitted, and was to be executed by elders chosen by the council, in con-

\* The fonts were restored in May, that the baptismal service might be performed according to the rules established by the synod of Lausanne.

junction with the clergy; order was to be observed in the admission of preachers, and the council was to refrain from the laying on of hands, which pertained to the clergy only; the more frequent administration of the sacrament, at least every month; and the singing of the psalms, were also among the things proposed.

By the advice of Bullinger a letter was addressed to the Genevese, and they were requested to have patience with the preachers. It was anxiously desired that Bern might give additional force to this appeal by its messengers: the exiled preachers therefore were obliged to return to that city, where new trials awaited them. A letter to Bullinger, dated June, 1538, relates how Conz led them into the presence of Sebastian Meyer and Erasmus Ritter, and with such excessive passion that Farel remembered and spoke of it in his latest years. Efforts were made to compel them to give up the proposed articles; but messengers should be sent with them to Geneva. It is said: "According to a second resolution we were to be immediately conducted to the city. Erasmus and Viret were allowed to be our companions. We were about a mile from the city when a messenger in great haste met us, and stated that we were forbidden to enter. The messengers held us back, or we should otherwise have tranquilly pursued our journey. But this saved our lives; for we afterwards learnt that an ambush had been formed outside the city, and that close to the very gates twenty gladiators, known banditti, were lying in wait for us. Both the lesser and the greater council resolved that the matter must be again brought before the people. The messengers and Viret here interposed so powerfully that the citizens seemed moved. But no sooner were they gone, than one of the councillors read our articles, and three accusations were preferred against us, in order to re-awaken the hatred of the populace. The first was, that we called the church of the Genevese our church; the second, that we spoke slightly of the Bernese, without using the proper titles of honor; and, thirdly, that we still insisted upon the right of excommunication. 'See,' it was said, 'they already treat the church as their bishopric! see how haughtily they despise their rulers; see how tyrannically they proceed; for what is excommunication but an instrument of tyranny?' This was quite sufficient to excite the rage of the people: they resolved to die rather than let us be heard."

Thus roused again to fury, the citizens decreed, in a second

assembly, which was so stormy that swords were drawn, the further banishment of Calvin and Farel, who were accordingly again expelled.

Some letters in Calvin's own handwriting give us several particulars regarding both his inward and outward life during his flight. A few extracts from these letters, written in his very concise style, may well supply the place of historical relation for those who would wish to become well acquainted with Calvin.

He passed by Bern to Basel, where he intended to remain. It appears that he took up his residence in the house of Grynaeus, with whom he lived on the most friendly terms. Farel spent seven weeks in Basel with Oporin. Viret went to Lausanne. Bucer did not neglect to send Calvin an invitation from Strasburg to visit him in that city; but he failed to associate Farel with him in the invitation, and Calvin, cherishing the friendship which he did, would not be separated from him. Farel however went soon after to Neufchatel, whither he was called with the warmest sentiments of affection and gratitude, and in spite of all his own resistance, by both the council and the people.

The following letter is addressed by Calvin to his "best and most faithful brother, Peter Viret, preacher at Lausanne:"\*—

"We came at last to Basel, but wet through with the rain, and almost dead with weariness. Danger even was not wanting to our journey, for one of us was almost carried away by the force of the torrent. But we found the stream more merciful than men; for these, our persecutors against right and duty, have driven us forth, while the torrent as the instrument of God's mercy delivered us from peril. We left Bern without greeting the senate, for we observed that there were some there inclined to keep us back. It was further intimated, that we should not be forgiven if we rejected so valuable a call. The Lord opened a way of escape, so that we might not appear too proud and heated. . . . We have committed your affairs, dear Coraud, to good people."

The following is a letter to Viret:† "We have stated our circumstances to the brethren in Strasburg and Zurich. As they have not yet answered us, we cannot determine with certainty what degree of credit our statement has found with them, however convinced we may be in our own conscience of its perfect truth.

\* End of May, 1538, MSS. Gen.

† Basel, June 14, 1538.

But we have learnt from another source what are the feelings of the Strasburgers ; for Bucer, before the receipt of our letter, had besought Grynæus not to let the churches cease from extraordinary exertions ; and so pathetically did he plead, that the sorrow of this brave man tended greatly to increase and deepen our affliction. But another distress obstructed our progress. Blaarer, like ourselves, has been banished, for some unaccountable cause, and with great insult, from Wurtemberg ; and Sturmius, who otherwise exercises great influence over the prince, has not been able to induce him to grant the exile any testimony in proof of his zeal and fidelity. He has even deprived him, contrary to every principle of humanity, of his pay. This is among ourselves ; so that, Coraud, there is little hope here for you."

The next is from Farel and Calvin to Viret.\* They had been informed by the latter that he would visit them ; and they thank him heartily, advising him in the mean time with the most friendly expressions.

"You know that, particularly in these times, and on human considerations, nothing could rejoice us more than to see you, and to spend some days with you ; and little was wanting to induce us, such was our ceaseless desire to see you, to persuade you to come, rather than dismiss you from our thoughts. But Grynæus and Farel quickly perceived the nature of the thing, and how much danger it involved. They saw that you would bring more of hatred upon yourself than we could have of satisfaction and delight. It was their opinion therefore that the attempt must not be made, and I resolved to abide by their warning. . . . Therefore, brother, we unite in saying, that we would rather deprive ourselves of your company, dear as it would be to us, than expose you to the chance, in these sad times, of offending those whom you ought to attach to you for the common welfare of the church, or at least not convert into open enemies."

To these letters I add some extracts from others, written by Calvin from Basel to Farel, and which strikingly illustrate the elevation and noble feelings of his soul.

The following is addressed to "Farel, the faithful preacher at Neufchatel, my beloved brother:"†—

"I can easily guess to what end our followers in Geneva

\* Basel, July 20, MSS. Gen.

† MSS. Gen. Aug. 4, 1538.



with their violent excitement will arrive ; after they have destroyed every prospect of peace by their fierceness, they will consider it the best thing they can do to render us, belied as we already are both publicly and privately, as hateful as possible in the eyes of all good men. Convinced however that they could not curse us, were it not permitted by God, we will not question to what this will of God may tend. Let us therefore humble ourselves, if we would not in our humiliation contend against God ; in the meanwhile let us await his appearance, for the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim shall soon fade away.\* As for myself, I should wish you not to be so anxious concerning me.

“ You will see from Bucer’s letter what he thinks ; he has also written to Grynæus, but I have not yet had an opportunity of reading the letter ; I suspect however that he urges him strongly to make me go thither, but this I will not do, except some greater necessity compels me.

“ Grynæus greets you in the most friendly manner, and begs you to pardon his not having yet written, in consideration of his numerous occupations. I have yet further read Bucer’s letter, in which he says, we ought to be very cautious about coming together, for he suspects that we should mutually excite each other to a mode of proceeding too much in accordance with our mere natural feeling. He desires me to avoid going anywhere, where my irritable spirit might be disturbed by agitation.” Bucer knew both these men thoroughly. Calvin to Farel : † “ I send you Bucer’s last letter : he continues as usual to convince me, showing by many arguments that his plan is a good one : but I understand his reasoning only according to the character of the man : in other respects the truth is self evident ; as that it would be judicious to let our opponents see me placed as a teacher in that church, which they, whether they would or not, must necessarily esteem. If a meeting be held, my voice would then have more weight, and it would give a favorable prepossession if such a church as this should appoint me to an office : but I have again excused myself, as I could not take you with me. Grynæus, although more shy and retired, to avoid any appearance of resisting our meeting, is evidently on the whole more inclined to adopt the opinion of Bucer. If they would bind me only for a moderate period, I should not long deliberate, but you see what their intention is. I will await

\* *Isai. xxviii. 1.*

\* *MSS. Gen. 20 Aug.*

your counsel. Powerful reasons prevent my hastening to you precipitately. They will allow you, that is, quietly to proceed in the work of God, but they would not suffer us both to do so. I might here conclude, to spare your hearing that which is unpleasing; but I will never refrain from telling what God has done, when I am speaking to him who is himself learning to submit to his providence, and is teaching others to do the same.

"Your nephew last Saturday fell sick here of the plague. His companion and the goldsmith, who bore witness to the Gospel at Lyons, immediately sent to me. As I had taken something to cure my headache, I could not visit him myself; but whatever was necessary for his bodily good was immediately and faithfully administered. A woman acquainted with both languages, and accustomed to such maladies, was engaged to sit up with him; not being sufficient of herself, she took her son-in-law to assist her. Grynæus visited him frequently; I did so too as soon as my health allowed it. When our 'T. saw that I did not fear the danger, he insisted on sharing it with me; we spent a long time with him yesterday. When the signs of approaching death were evident, I imparted spiritual rather than bodily comfort. His mind seemed to wander, but he had still sufficient consciousness to call me back to his chamber, and to entreat me earnestly to pray for him. He had heard me speak much of the usefulness of prayer. Early this morning, about four o'clock, he departed to the Lord. Of his companion, who was seized by the same malady, we cannot yet speak with confidence; yesterday I thought there was cause for hope, but I feared this night; since, although he had his own attendant, and lay in a separate chamber, he heard what had happened to his companion. I shall see him I hope again to-day.

"This excellent man Schmidt has been dismissed by his master, because he was seen with the infected. I have sent him with a recommendation to Strasburg, that he may be able to renew his labors there."

Calvin conducted himself in the whole of these most difficult circumstances with the greatest caution; he refused from the very beginning to allow that the council, and not the preacher, should decide in religious affairs. This was indeed one of the chief deficiencies in the reformation, and for which no remedy has even yet been found. As in Geneva, so in all other countries, the temporal power attempted to become absolute; hence the church was subjected to the state, as before the reformation

the state was subject to the church ; there was therefore in this respect a transition from one evil to another. For the rest, the order of the service, to which the clergy accommodated themselves, continued afterwards in the reformed church according to the pattern set by that of Geneva ; and this accounts, among other reasons, for the use of unleavened bread in our church ; since when Calvin was restored, he would never enter into a contention on the subject.

Farel had abolished, before Calvin's arrival, the observation of festivals, and retained only the Sabbath ; he was zealous for his early regulations. Calvin attributed little importance to these indifferent things, but he insisted so much the more on the authority of the clergy. He rightly attributed his banishment to the hatred of the people, of the council, and of the clergy to church-discipline, without which, according to his innermost convictions, no church could exist. "It is objected to us," he says, "that we wish to introduce a new papacy, and to tyrannize over the free church."

The ceremonies served as a pretence to many, but not with the senate, which declared that it would only re-admit the preachers on condition that they accommodated themselves to the prescribed service. Calvin admitted immediately after to the synod of Zurich that he set no value upon ceremonies. In his Apostolic Epistle from Strasburg to the city of Geneva, he himself advises it to admit the use of unleavened bread. Prayer-hours were at a later period set apart on festival days ; but when this practice was suddenly abolished, as we shall hereafter see, by the council and the people, Calvin offered no resistance. It was thus also that he expressed himself towards the church of the English exiles at Frankfort ; so that we may readily and without doubt attribute his present rude opposition to the anxiety which he felt on account of his great fundamental principle.

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## CHAPTER X.

### CALVIN IN STRASBURG.

WHILE the enemies of order were triumphing in Geneva, and other preachers were invited, excesses prevailed to the most alarming extent. Troops of bacchanals paraded the streets by

night, singing riotous songs, and threatening to cast the preachers into the Rhone. The council banished all the citizens who would not receive the decrees passed by the synod of Lausanne. Saunier, Mathurin Cordier, and many of the better class, left the city, torn as it was by factious insurrections and murders.

Calvin during the whole of this period (1538), remained at Strasburg as in a quiet haven. It was an important season for him: the powers awakened in the preceding storm had now time for development, and his ability as a theologian reached its highest perfection. During his two or three years' residence in Strasburg, he produced the first of his admirable contributions to exegetical theology. This was the second stage in his doctrinal labors; and, which is of greater importance, his own religious life now took a higher direction. He forgave his enemies, and promoted with apostolic love the interests of the churches by which he was persecuted. At his instigation a French reformed congregation was established, which afforded a pattern to the reformed in France. He also became more closely acquainted with Melancthon, and the German religious life. Thus his residence in Strasburg was the door to the whole of his remarkable career.

Strasburg\* as early as the year 1525, through the first efforts of the council, and some few evangelical preachers, had adopted the reformation according to the example of the Swiss cantons. When Calvin was called thither, the high-schools just then established gave a new celebrity to the place. Johannes Sturm, Bucer, Capito, Hedio, Niger, were then laboring there. The first of these convinced the council how the university ought to be opened, and traced out a plan and a system of laws for the institution. Jacob Sturm, one of the first council, was the promoter of the high-school; and multitudes of young men, anxious for improvement, flocked to the new seminary, not only out of the different states of Germany, but from other countries.

\* Jung. Beiträge zur Gesch. der Reformation, T. I. Ab. viii. In a catechism now before me, *Isagoge de Pueris instituendis Ecclesiæ Argentinensis, anno 1527, mense Augusto*, one of the oldest elementary books used in the city, we find pure Christian doctrine agreeing with that of Calvin. Excommunication is held, s. 17. "Excommunicantur quidam, ut ab eorum et vita et doctrina alii cavere possint. Adhæc ut excommunicatus pudore suffusus curet et Deo et hominibus vitæ emendatione reconciliari sese." The circumstances are also stated which render excommunication necessary. Baptism is spoken of as the sacrament and sign of the new birth; infant baptism is necessary. "Baptismus regenerationis laverum, ad inductionem Christi." Of the Lord's Supper it is said, "Suum corpus edimus, sanguinemque bibimus, sed spiritualiter et cum ingenti comodo."



The evangelical city willingly received those who were persecuted on account of their faith in their own land, and thus a church was established there for the use of the French reformed.

Calvin had entertained the idea of withdrawing from the public service of religion, and returning to private life. It was only in the midst of struggles that his extraordinary ability could become developed. The same was the case with Luther, and it was the work of a higher power to bring him back to public life. Calvin himself relates: "When I was freed from this call of duty, I purposed to seek tranquillity; when that most excellent servant of Christ, Martin Bucer, following the example of Farel, adjured me in the name of God to accept a new appointment; he even adduced the instance of Jonah, and so terrified me that I again assumed the character of a teacher. But although I was still what I had ever been in myself, avoiding publicity as much as possible, I was forced to attend at the imperial diet, and, whether I would or not, appear in the presence of a vast assemblage."

Two letters in his handwriting, from Strasburg, afford us some information respecting his circumstances at that time. I give them both on this account, and also because they show the view which he took of the various parties then existing.

Calvin to Farel: "Grace be to you, and peace from the Lord! I rejoice that the marriage festivities of Grynæus happened just at this time, when so many and such weighty affairs obliged you to remain. There was no conference, as had been expected, and our friends returned after two days. The Zurichers guessed what Grynæus had in his mind; they promised therefore to come, and on the appointed day arrived the apology. When the necessity of a conference was afterwards insisted upon, all hope of its being held was finally abandoned. One cannot but lament that men, otherwise so faithful and prudent, should care so little for the common peace. They ought to strive not only to preserve a holy union among each other, but, as a matter of duty, to see that other churches agree with them, and that they also agree with one another. Let it be that Luther is always sinning; I confess that I am not satisfied with him; but what will be the end, if we strive with our whole might to prove each other sinners? They are not a little unjust to Bucer when they pretend that no good is to be expected from him. Let it even be allowed them in every respect to take the lead, yet they certainly must commit an error somewhere, for otherwise why

should they so fear a conference? If they think that Bucer might be improved, how could they find a better occasion to admonish him? But I need not say this to one who shares my regret and cannot make things different. The Bernese, in expectation of an approaching conference, have deemed it advisable not to come to the festival, lest it might be supposed that something particular was in preparation: they have therefore excused themselves; and unless I had wished to throw myself into the arms of death, I could not trust my body to such a journey. So violent a diarrhœa seized me the day before, that, almost worn out, I could scarcely hold myself upright the whole day, notwithstanding the greatest care and repose; it is fortunate therefore that your trouble was not useless."

In the following he admonishes Farel to act cautiously towards that dangerous man Konz.

"If we believe that the Lord is the avenger of the innocent, as we are not without the testimony of a good conscience before Him, let us be contented with this, our only protection. I will never consent to our using subterfuges and art, the resource of those who have something evil to defend: but still we must not neglect such favorable opportunities, as can in nowise lead us from the right path on which we have set out. It is this which displeases me in Bucer: he reproaches us too severely with having sinned, and then he adds, but where is there a better, where a more learned man? I should be more pleased, if, instead of praising us so much, he less readily accused us of error.

"I expect you to send me an especial account of your meeting: happy shall I be if everything was done for the edification of the church. Our own friends continue to exert themselves diligently to improve its discipline, but cautiously, lest the enemy hearing of it might throw obstructions in their way. If any tolerable arrangement be established here, the only method, as far as I can see, of introducing it among you is to let it be proposed at your first meeting, and confirmed by a general resolution; but this must not be till the end of the year, for I can see no hope of success if it be attempted sooner.

"We have administered the Lord's Supper in our little church for the first time, according to the usage of the place, and have determined to administer it every month. Capito and Bucer desire me to greet you and our brethren again in the most friendly manner. Bucer is about to undertake a long, and at this time of the year, a most difficult journey; he is

going to the Landgraf, in order to proceed with him into Saxony. It is his wish to confer with him, with some free-cities, with Luther, and the Saxons, respecting ecclesiastical property, which it is their desire to restore to its legitimate use. I have given him a letter to Philip,\* in which I beseech him to explain his meaning more fully to me; to this I have added twelve articles, and if he grant me these, I can have nothing to desire either of him or Luther in this respect. When I hear anything, I will let you know immediately. I shall go to Bucer's house after two days."

The following is addressed to Pignæus;† it proves Calvin's superiority to slander and common report: he thus sensibly expresses his opinion:—"That I have not spoken openly to our brethren respecting the late occurrences, was by design. Even if I had not certainly known and seen that I cannot write a single word, without its being made an occasion for every kind of slander, yet had I resolved by my silence to put a stop to the maledictions of my enemies. I was convinced that this would be approved of by my brethren. Now, as it cannot be otherwise, I write to them respecting the foundation of my faith: not one complaining letter, however, to your consistory shall be extorted from me. The quiet of the churches is too precious in my sight, to let me think of breaking it on my own account. If there were any proper causes of complaint, if the dignity of the complainant were sufficiently great to give weight to his representation, you might perhaps move me, since my silence then would stamp disgrace upon my office. But I see no end to the struggle, if I express my own opinion on the matter, or how such cabals are to be brought to silence.

"If the interests of Christ and the church did not keep me back, they would soon reap the fruit of their weakness and insolence. But I should appear morose in the eyes of men of piety, if, not contented with the answer of my good conscience before God, or with the judgment of the church, I yielded to the force of my indignation because of the tumult excited by these noisy and worthless men.

"I will not say how honorable the decision of the church is to us; it is sufficient that our ministry has earned its praise. Neither will I repeat how many men of the highest standing,

\* It merits observation that he felt himself drawn towards Melancthon, not Luther.

† MSS. Gen. Strasburg, Oct. 1, 1538.

and in the most distinguished churches, have borne testimony to us both publicly and privately. This only do I say, that so long as I, resting on the purity of my own conscience and on the judgment of the church, do not shun the light, it is indifferent to me how much these dogs may bark in their holes and corners. I am convinced however that they will not be able to do this much longer; the day is not far distant, as I hope, when the justification of truth will be heard. But you may very quietly consider this, whether it be right that a man called by Strasburg to the office of a preacher should be so mangled by that slanderer."

"The edition of our catechism gives me a great deal of anxiety, especially as the day is so near at hand." "Thy Calvin."

In the same month (Oct. 24, 1538) a letter to Farel shows us the excited state of his feelings, when he heard of the death of Coraud, who had been banished with him, and whom he suspected of being murdered.

"I am so bowed down by the death of Coraud that I can set no limit to my anguish. None of my usual employments is sufficient to keep my mind from perpetually reverting to the subject. The distresses and sorrows of the day are supplied by still more painful thoughts in the melancholy hours of the night. It is not merely the usual sleeplessness, against which habit has hardened me, that I have now to suffer. I am killed by an utter want of sleep, and this is of all things most destructive to my health.\* But my mind is chiefly burdened with that iniquitous deed which, if my suspicions be well grounded, I must, whether I will or not, bring to light.† To what will they who come after us arrive, if such things happen at our very beginning! Greatly do I fear that this crime will be punished before long by some great affliction in the church. And truly it is no slight indication of the anger of God, that where there are so few good ministers, the church should be thus deprived of one of its best. How then can we do otherwise than lament our misfortune, even though consolation is not wanting! The greatest comfort which we have is this, that all testify by their grief and desire the veneration in which his virtue and integrity were held. Our Lord never allows, even upon earth, that the wickedness of our ene-

\* Melancthon was all his life afflicted with this kind of sleeplessness.

† Ed. L. Ep. xi. Calvin's suspicions were probably well grounded, since many murderous attempts had been made against the evangelical ministers at Geneva. His soul became elevated in misfortune with courage and in the strength of faith.



mies should remain hid. They have not gained the worth of a single hair through his death. There stands before the judgment-seat of God a witness and an accuser of their unrighteousness, whose voice will proclaim with more awful accents than when it shakes the earth, their eternal reprobation. But we whom God has still left in this world, would desire quietly to pursue the path which our brother walked, till our course be finished. Whatever the difficulties which oppose us, they will not prevent our attaining to that rest to which he has already been admitted. If this hope did not remain sure and steadfast, what cause for despair should we not find in almost everything around us? But the truth of the Lord is immovable and indestructible, and therefore will we remain upon our watch-tower to the end, and till the kingdom of Christ, which is now hidden, shall appear."

Calvin was not only appointed by the council at Strasburg minister of the French congregation, but was also desired to give lectures in divinity. He himself speaks of his theological labors in one of his letters: "I have been lately induced by Capito to give public lectures: thus I either lecture or preach every day." Johannes Sturm\* also relates, "that in the third year after his own arrival in Strasburg, Calvin came to that city, and was so recommended to the council by the theologians, that he taught in the academy, and had the French church of St. Nicolas prepared for him."

"The first portion of Scripture upon which Calvin commented was the Gospel of St. John. He was present at all the disputations in the gymnasium, or conducted them, defending his own theses. He also held a disputation with the dean of Passau, who entertained the erroneous opinion that salvation proceeds from the works of faith. Jacobus Sturm and the inspectors of the schools presided on this occasion. He now also, while with us, enlarged and corrected his 'Institutes,' and nothing was afterwards added which cannot be found in this edition."

At Strasburg, Calvin's mind was still occupied with his great plan, the establishment of a system of church discipline. He speaks of this continually in his letters: it was the theme of his most earnest thoughts. His whole system of discipline is found

\* "Joh. Sturmii Rectoris Arg. Antipappi tres. 1579. Quarti Antipappi tres partes. Neapoli Palat. 1580, pp. 20, 21. Eo tempore, eo inquam biennio, quo nobiscum erat Calvinus, suas Inst. recognovit et auxit. Quibus nihil post addidit quod cum primis pugnet, si æquo certetur arbitrio. Nemo de hac editione conquerebatur: ut de Luthero taceam, qui amanter Calvinum in suis literis salutaverat."

described in the eighth chapter of the revised Strasburg edition of the 'Institutes.' In the last edition of the work nothing is actually defective, and the only fault of the second edition is, that there is a want of order. Nothing is said expressly on the punishment of heretics, but the magistrate and the church together are represented as having a right to punish offences. The church ought not to give the sinner over to the temporal power, but should practise a spiritual jurisdiction by the Word of God alone. Of this more will be said hereafter, but we here find the basis of all the subsequent arrangements respecting discipline. The fourteen articles agreed upon in Paris in the year 1559 had the same foundation, and hence the protest against an irremovable president, and the appointment of two laymen to one minister.

In Calvin's letter from Worms to his deputy at Strasburg, whom he calls his deacon, we see his anxiety about the discipline introduced, and his desire to establish some preparation for the Lord's Supper, a confession. He had already, at Geneva, shown his wish to introduce the rule of denying the sacrament to the unworthy; and this was now actually observed in Switzerland, Caroli having been excluded from the Lord's table. Hence the blame which attached to Farel for having received him again into his friendship as soon as he offered himself, without further inquiry. There was much conversation also at this time respecting a person named Alexander, who had been excommunicated, and who therefore, according to Calvin's opinion, ought not to be received by any of the brethren. That he himself would hold no conversation with him, and had expelled him his house, we learn from a letter to Farel, dated Oct. 27, 1539. No mention however is made of the form of excommunication employed.

With regard to the spiritual condition of Strasburg, Calvin represents it, in the letter alluded to above, as miserably low. "Wherever you look, something offensive meets your eyes. For my own part, as I can see no end to these miseries, I should almost despair in my very soul, were I not kept back by the consideration that one must never forsake the work of God, happen what may. In the midst too of so many evils, the Lord still gives something to comfort us."

That Calvin was not at this time opposed to the practices of the Lutheran church, and that he wished to establish the rite of confession, as exercised among the Lutherans, appears from a

letter to Farel,\* in which particular mention is made of this part of discipline. Calvin writes: "That the examination of which I have spoken may excite some scruple in the hearts of good Christians, does not surprise me. It is indeed no new thing that pious souls should fear our falling back into superstition, whenever they hear of our establishing anything which has even a remote similarity to popish inventions. Although I cannot expel these doubts from their minds, for we have not the means of doing so, I may express the wish that they would be somewhat more careful to separate the good wheat from the chaff and the tares. I have often told you, that I should have thought it unwise to abolish confession in our churches, unless the rite which I have lately introduced had been established in its place. That you may the better understand my sentiments, I will briefly explain what I mean.

"When the day for celebrating the Lord's Supper approaches, I give notice that any one who may wish to communicate should come beforehand to my house: I add my reason for this invitation. It is, first, that they who know but little of religion may be better instructed; secondly, that they who need admonition may receive it; and, lastly, that they who are afflicted in their consciences may obtain comfort. But as there is some danger that the people, who cannot distinguish clearly between the yoke of Christ and the tyranny of the pope, may fear they are about to be riveted in a new slavery, I am laboring to meet this doubt. I not only distinctly declare that the popish confession is altogether hateful to me, but give reasons why it is so. I state expressly, that this superstition must not only excite horror, but that no law can be endured which tends to ensnare the conscience; that Christ is our only lawgiver, and that we are answerable to him alone. I then show, that this practice is not in anywise opposed to our freedom, for that I desire nothing but what Christ himself has taught, since it were plainly a scandal if you would not allow the church, whose communion you seek, to inquire into your belief. And must not the state of the church be a very unhappy one, if it were compelled, at the moment of administering so great a mystery, to admit those of whom nothing is known, or whom it has just cause to regard with suspicion? But to say nothing of the church itself, how can the preacher, to whom it pertains to distribute the means of grace, properly

\* MSS. Gen. Mar. 1540.

acquit himself of the duty, if he have no means of distinguishing between the worthy and the unworthy? How can he otherwise avoid exposing the sacrament to open shame, and that before dogs and swine? But I am foolish in giving you this long, disjointed statement. Time also fails me: that which I feared has happened; I have been called off many times since I began to write."

It was Calvin's original wish to administer the Lord's Supper every four weeks; and it was only the early arrangement in Geneva which led to that frequent celebration of the sacrament in the reformed church, which is still, after three centuries, continued. We learn the same thing from the following letter addressed by Calvin to "Nicolas Pareus, his very dear brother."\*

"I am very glad that you have deferred the administration of the holy sacrament till next month, because you could not celebrate it without breaking through the order which, for good reasons, I so strongly wish to see observed.† It delights my heart that our little church is safe, and that it does not suffer through my absence. This is really a consolation and refreshment, while affairs in other respects look so gloomy. Although it was only at setting off, and in few words, that I stated what seemed necessary, the advice was good, and I see with joy that you have followed it. I say this, not because it was my advice, but because it has been not without its use to you, or without benefit to others. With regard to the poor, I am in great perplexity how we are to find the means of assisting them. You see the poverty of our church, and I have been unable to obtain in any way help from France. If you can but find enough in our chest to supply the present necessity till my return, we will then consider what can be done."

In another letter from Strasburg, addressed to Pignæus, and dated January 5, 1539, he answers a difficult question respecting the sacrament.‡

"The brethren of Geneva are offended at my letter, in which I warned them against a schism among themselves. Sonnerius had told me that they considered it unlawful to partake of the Lord's Supper with evil-doers, or to receive it from the hands of unholy ministers. As I thought they were tormenting them-

\* MSS. Gen. Worms, Dec. 14, 1540.

† Calvin insisted particularly, at the Zurich synod, on the administration of the Lord's Supper every month.

‡ MSS. Gen.



selves with superstitious scruples, I was anxious to remove them." He then says plainly, the Genevese ought to partake of the Lord's Supper even though it were administered by unworthy ministers. "I will let you see in three words," he continues, "why I have thus taught. A church exists wherever the spirit of Christ prevails; though there may be errors, some degree of soundness must still be preserved, and the judgment of the church must be accepted as the Word of God. Baptism can only be administered in the church: a church is there where the doctrine is preached, through which it is established as on a rock. If even the doctrine is marked with error, it is enough for me if only that which is fundamental remains secure. Pious and believing men therefore may partake of the sacraments even in Geneva.

"But I have also said, at the same time, that it would be rather a sacrilege than a sacrament if I administered the Lord's Supper among them, and I have still the same feeling. It is the preachers only who are concerned with those who, guilty of sin, draw near unworthily. As the minister distributes the sacrament, so it is his duty to exercise foresight and fidelity, and not to bestow the holy mystery without distinction. But certainly they who have a good conscience need not keep away, if the sacrament be administered according to the Word of the Lord, because of the wickedness of others. I do not therefore contradict myself. . . . The Israelites, and even the first Christians, received the sacraments in the most melancholy condition of the church.\* . . . I neither intend, nor consider it necessary, to pursue the whole of the subject here; but I will never allow myself to become the author of a schism. Before I could do this, I must have learnt that the church had altogether ceased to honor God and preach his Word."

Calvin exhibited much moderation, reflection, and love of peace in this affair, as he did in all the circumstances of his life, where the honor of God was not assailed.

In 1539 Calvin received the right of citizenship at Strasburg,† and lived in great respect. Sturmius says, "The French church

\* The Genevese, who meant rightly, had gone to the other extreme after the banishment of Calvin; and as he had refused to administer the sacraments, they would now have none.

† Two records of this fact exist at Gotha (fol. 738, 739). In the former, John Calvin is said to have bought the right of citizenship, and to have enrolled himself in the Tailors' Company, Tuesday, July 29, 1539. The statement is to the same purport in the other document.

here increased every day. Many students and men of learning came hither from France on account of Calvin." But his own inward affection would not permit him to forget his earlier church: he felt that he could never cease to be its minister and pastor. Thus, on the first of October, 1538, he wrote a most edifying letter to the Genevese, exhorting them at the end to have courage, and to place their whole trust on the goodness of God, on his grace and promises. In a second letter to the same people, dated June 25, 1539, are admirable passages, which might profitably be addressed to any church. The Genevese, since Calvin's departure, had fallen into disputes with their new preachers. Referring to this, he properly remarks, how highly the ministers of a community ought to be respected; and that if they only preach the Gospel, people ought to be contented with them, though they may have their imperfections.

"All personal considerations laid aside, let it be especially recollected, what honor the Lord has bestowed upon them; and what he has entrusted to those who are charged with the office of proclaiming his Word. . . . Thus he commands us not only to listen with fear and trembling, when the Word is preached to us, but to show all honor and respect for those who preach it, who, as his ambassadors, are adorned with his commission, and whom he desires to have regarded as his angels. . . . If this observation has any force with you, you will never lose sight of the principle, that those who preach to you the Word of God, and to whom the conduct of your souls has been committed, ought to be recognized by you as occupying the place of parents; and that they should be highly esteemed for the sake of their office, which they exercise among you according to their divine commission. It is not my meaning that you are to be deprived of that right which God has given to you, as to all his people, to subject all preachers to a trial, that the good may be distinguished from the evil, and those sent back who, under the mask of shepherds, are wolfish plunderers. All I wish is, that you should treat those who still perform the duties of the ministry up to a certain point, and are therefore sufferable, with Christian forbearance, and so may endeavor to learn rather what you owe to others than what others owe to you. We must, of course, see that those who are called to be preachers fulfil their duty. I acknowledge that great judgment is necessary in this matter. Most certainly I do not wish to see a kind of despotism introduced into the church, so that pious people

should be compelled to hold those for servants of God who do not perform their office. It is not to be endured that one should be called upon to pay that respect and honor to the unworthy, which the Lord himself has assigned only to the true preachers of his Word. I readily admit that he who does not preach the Word of the Lord Christ, does not deserve to be regarded as a preacher, or to be treated with the respect due to the office, whatever be his title, or whatever his pretensions.

“But as I hear that our brethren, now settled among you, are teaching you the Gospel, I do not see what excuse you can make before God, if you neglect or despise them. If any one among you says that this or that in their doctrine, or their manners, displeases him, inquire diligently, I beseech you, in the name of Jesus Christ, what it is. Then, as the law of love commands us, not lightly to judge our neighbor, but to show as much mildness and consideration as possible, with how much greater freedom from passion should we act towards those whom God has set over us! And even should there be anything to find fault with in their conduct, of which I cannot judge, yet ought you to recollect that no man in the world is free from blame. I exhort you, therefore, and beseech you in the name and in the power of Christ, that you turn your attention and thoughts from man to your Redeemer, and endeavor, as it is our duty to do, to follow his commandments. If you contend with your ministers, so that dissensions and scandals are created, as I hear they are, it is evident that their office, in which the glory of Christ should shine forth, is put to shame and almost trodden under foot. Beware, then, lest while you intend to humble man, you in reality declare war with God. For the rest, do not imagine that it is a small thing to foment divisions and sects in this manner: this is so great an offence that one can scarcely hear of it without a shudder. And that this offence has been created while the preachers and the church have fallen into a state of disunion and schism, is shown by the thing itself. Lastly, if I may believe that you regard me as your brother, and that a bond exists between us which corresponds to that name, I beseech you not to cast away these preachers, of whose appointment I have approved, only seeking your good and your salvation, without fear or regard to man.”

## CHAPTER XI.

### SADOLET.

As soon as the supports of the reformation were removed from Geneva, the pope took the determination to employ this favorable circumstance for the overthrow of the city. The cardinal Sadoletus,\* a man of much spirit and pure morals, who had his see in Carpentras in Dauphiné, on the borders of Savoy, wrote to the people of Geneva, with the design of furthering this object, so pathetic and skilful a letter, that it would doubtless have produced great injury in the city, vexed by continual agitation, had it not been written in a strange language. There was even at that time no one in Geneva who could answer it. Calvin however, as soon as he met with this letter in Strasburg, replied to it with so much eloquence, aided by the spirit of God, who interceded for the bewildered church "with groanings which cannot be uttered," that Sadoletus lost all courage and desisted from his attempt. The answer is dated September 1, 1539. It exhibits the noble disposition of its great author, or in other words his inward conviction of duty,—the power of the voice which called him to Geneva, and constrained him to labor for the salvation of its church. He always regarded himself, as we have already observed, even while in Strasburg, as the pastor of that church.

Sadolet assailed the Genevese with the common argument, which we are sometimes obliged to hear even in the present day, that the catholic church, with its long experience of thirteen centuries, must have more to advance than the reformed community, which had then existed for scarcely more than twenty-five years. According to Sadolet, unity is the chief characteristic of the catholic church; it is governed and guided, in all ages and in all lands, by the one same spirit of Christ, and the surest sign of error in doctrine is difference of opinion.† He accuses the

\* Ranke, 'Die Römischen Päpste' in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, p. 133. Sadolet and Contarini seem to have had some sympathy with the German reformers, but their feeling respecting the unity of the church was so strong that they could not separate themselves from it.

† Bossuet, and in our own times La Mennais, while he still held with the catholics, have most absurdly repeated this notion.



protestants of having torn the vesture of Christ, which even the heathen would not do, and of warring against charity, which desires the preservation of unity. The man who destroys this unity is forever lost, if he do not repent, and the reformation itself is a great falling away from this unity of the church.

It is remarkable, at the very beginning of Calvin's answer, how powerfully he was impelled by his conscience to defend the church by which he had been banished. "Although I am no longer permitted to exercise my office there, this shall not prevent me from upholding its faith and constancy. How can I fail of anxiety for this city of Geneva, from which I can never divert my thoughts, and which I love no less than my own soul?"

Nor should we leave unpraised the urbanity with which he treats his opponent. He had resolved to do so, and it was a great thing for those times, to say nothing better. Alexander Morus rightly observes, "He who would know the force and beauty of his style, should read his answer to Sadolet. No one can do this without feeling his heart touched, or without becoming better and holier." Calvin expressed in this composition that sacred feeling of duty with which his apostolic office had impressed him.

While this little work excites admiration by the elevated character of the ideas which it contains, and by the beauty of its latinity, it is no less deserving of praise for the clearness and sobriety of its sentiments. But the style of Calvin's French translation is harsh and disagreeable.

The commencement refers to Sadolet's mode of argument.

"You show that there is no disorder more perilous to the soul than a corrupted religion; that the church affords the best rule as to the worship of God; and that, consequently, there is no hope of the salvation of those who have destroyed the unity of the church, unless they repent. But you afterwards show, that a separation from your unity is an actual apostasy, and lastly, that the Gospel which we have all received is nothing else than a medley of ungodly theorems. Hence you draw the conclusion, that a most awful judgment must await those who do not obey your words."

Calvin assents to the proposition, that no greater danger can threaten our salvation than a corrupted form of worship. It is not a newly invented service which the disciples of Christ should adopt, but that which has been consecrated by the usage of the church from its beginning. "Here, Sadoletus," says Calvin,

“you have afforded me a proper ground for my defence ; for if you allow that when the truth of God is turned by false views of doctrine to a lie, it carries with it the ruin of souls ; it then remains for us to inquire which of our two churches has retained the only true form of divine worship.

“You proceed at once to a definition of the church, and this might have led you into the right track, since you say, that is the church which from the beginning, and in all lands, has continued the same in Christ, being everywhere and at all times conducted by his spirit. But where are we to look for the Word of God ? Here verily God foresaw how dangerous it would be to bestow his spirit without a written word. He determined indeed that the church should be guided by the spirit, but he combined this guidance with the Word of God, that there might be no danger of its appearing wavering and uncertain. And you will see this not only in the apostolic epistles, but as often as the prophets prophesy of the church, which shall again be established, or spread through the whole world, they invariably refer in the first place to the Word.”

The church, therefore, should have for its basis the Word of God, and not rest in general upon the Holy Spirit only. This is the great principle of the reformers, which Luther so justly defended against the whole tribe of fanatics, and which proved the intelligence, clearness, and wisdom of their perceptions.

“We know now by experience how necessary this warning was, assailed as we are by two sects, which are themselves most opposite to each other. What has the pope in common with the anabaptists ? yet both pursue us with the same weapons ; and though they may boast of the spirit of God, they have both no other object than that of suppressing and concealing the Word of God to make room for their own lies.”

Without the Word of God a man fluctuates to and fro with the Holy Spirit, and becomes sometimes a papist, sometimes an anabaptist. “You bring punishment upon yourselves for this, that you sin against the Holy Ghost, dividing him from the Word, since you seem obliged to act as if inquirers knew not whether they should follow the authority of the church, or hearken to those whom you call teachers of new doctrines. If you knew that the spirit enlightens the church, in order to open the Word of God to it, and that this Word is as a test, whereby all doctrines may be tried, would you have had recourse to this difficult discussion ? Know this then by your own experience,

that it is not less injurious to boast of the Spirit without the Word, than it would be absurd to appeal to the Word without the Spirit.

“If now you are willing to accept a definition of the church which is more agreeable to the truth, say, that it is a community of all saints, extending over the whole world, and through all ages, but that, being united by the doctrine of Christ and by one spirit, it desires unity of faith and brotherly concord. We deny that we have had even the slightest dispute with this church; on the contrary, we reverence it as a mother, and have no other wish than that of remaining in its bosom.”

The catholic beholds the church in the unity of the faith through the Holy Ghost; the protestant views it in the communion of believers, who are bound together in faith and love through the Word and the Spirit. The difference therefore between the two definitions consists in the reference to the Word of God.

“You are well aware, Sadolet, that we are not only in more exact harmony with the primitive church than you, but that we strive for nothing else than the restoration of the church to its primitive condition.”

The perfection of the church depends upon three principal points,—doctrine, discipline, sacraments; it may be added, fourthly, on its having a form of worship calculated to impress the people with pious sentiments. This general statement is followed by a criticism on the catholic church, and by a eulogy on the protestant church in reference to these four points.

Calvin says of the papacy, that it has neither the doctrine of Christ, nor discipline, sacraments, nor proper ceremonies. He attacks, in the first place, its doctrine of justification through good works, and shows in what sense the protestants still uphold works. His idea of faith was, that the authority which the catholic church assumed to itself was not necessary in the variety of opinions which prevailed, because the Christian believes in a God who enlightens us by his spirit, and gives peace to our consciences by his sure witness. “This is the confidence of which Paul speaks to us; this too is the ground of the authority which the church possesses to judge of the truth. However many opinions there may be in the world, the genuine Christian will always find his right path. I do not dream of that exactness in the knowledge of the truth which never errs, and may assume to itself the privilege of proudly despising all

around it. Far less ought it to be supposed that believers can comprehend all mysteries, and remain blind in the clearest things. I insist on this only, that if they thoroughly examine the Word of God, they can never so err as to perish. The truth which that Word gives them is so certain and so distinct, that it can never be destroyed either by men or angels."

It is next observed, that as the Holy Ghost is with the church, the church would never fail to find the way of salvation if its will continued good; and that the assembled clergy would be always able to judge respecting error without the help of papal authority. Calvin then defends the protestant church against the charge of levity. "We have always wished that the discipline of the old church law had been retained among us. Discipline is necessary to hold the church together, as the body is by its nerves. But where is your discipline?"

This is followed by a passage in which he justifies his own separation from the Roman church. The whole is in the highest degree interesting, because it enables us to understand how Calvin justified his separation in his own eyes, and because the mere act of separation itself still keeps back many evangelical catholics. Sadoletus had summoned him before the judgment-seat of God: Calvin summons him to the same tribunal.

"Let our ears listen for the sound of the trumpet which shall awaken the dead. Let our souls and spirits watch for the Judge, who by the light of his countenance will disclose all that lies hidden in darkness, who will reveal all the secrets of men's hearts, and will consume the wicked by the breath of his mouth. Consider now what you will have to answer for yourself and for your party. Our cause, supported as it is by truth, will not fail of a righteous defence. As for ourselves, we will not contend, but will seek salvation in humble confession and earnest prayer. For our office we will not plead, for there will be no one who will not be able to speak of this.

"Difficult has it been for me, O Lord! to meet the hatred of my accusers upon earth; but I approach thy judgment-seat with unfailing trust, for with Thee is truth; and established upon this alone have I been able to labor. I am accused of a twofold crime, of heresy and schism. My heresy in their eyes is this,—I have not adopted the principles which they espouse. But what should I do? From thine own mouth I learned that there is no other light of truth to conduct us on the path of life, but that which thy Word has kindled. I heard that all which



the human spirit had discovered by its own ability merely, respecting thy glory, the honor due to thy name, and the mysteries of faith, was only vanity. When I looked at men, I found them all differing about thy Word. Those who ought to have been the guides of faith, either did not understand thy Word or troubled themselves little about it. They introduced strange doctrines, and deceived the wretched people: they called Thee the only God, but they created as many gods as they could discover saints. That I became aware of this, I ascribe, O Lord! to the light which I received through thine own spirit. Thou hast held thy word before me as a torch; Thou hast deeply possessed my soul that I might shun all these things. If I be called upon to give an account of my doctrine, my conscience tells me that I have never forsaken the line which Thou hast prescribed to all thy servants. What I therefore have believed myself to receive from thine own mouth, that have I with all faithfulness desired to give again to the church. To this end have all my contentions, all my labors, tended, that thy glory and thy righteousness, and the mercies of Christ might be made known; for impossible it is that that Word should deceive us, that 'this is the eternal life, to know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.'

"With regard now to the accusation which I have been compelled to hear so frequently, that I am an apostate from the church, my conscience accuses me not, unless he ought to be called a traitor who, when he sees the soldiers in a battle leave their ranks and take to flight, seizes the standard, and raising it on high calls them back to the fight. Thy people, O Lord! at that time were all dispersed: I raised not a strange standard, but thine own glorious ensign. Here however have they begun to rage, so that the contest has been converted into a schism. On which side the sin is, do Thou, O Lord, determine! Often have I, by word and deed, evinced how desirous I am to preserve unity; but that is to me the right unity which has its beginning and its end in Thee. Whenever Thou hast commanded us to preserve peace and unity, Thou hast also taught us that Thou alone art the bond of this unity. But to continue in peace with those who pretend to be the rulers of the church and the pillars of the faith, I must have purchased it at the expense of denying thy truth. All danger however would have been preferable to incurring the guilt of yielding to such a condition; for Christ has told us, 'Though heaven and earth pass away, yet shall not

my Word pass away.' I did not therefore consider that I was apostatizing from thy church, because I contended against these oppressors; for Thou didst warn us by thy Son, that leaders of the church would arise with whom we must not be of one mind. It was not said of strangers, but of the pastors themselves, that they would be ravening wolves, of whom we must beware. How then could I give the hand of fellowship to such? I saw continually before my eyes the example of thy prophets, who had to carry on so many struggles with the priests of their time, and with the false prophets, who, we well know, were the guides and rulers of the church in Israel. But thy holy prophets were not considered schismatics, because they sought to restore the fallen religion, and would not yield to them, notwithstanding all their pretensions to power. They remained therefore in the true unity of the church, although pursued by the wicked priests with every conceivable kind of anathemas, and when regarded as unworthy of a place among men, much more of being ranked among the holy. Confirmed by this example I have pursued my way so undisturbed, that neither threatenings nor the accusation of apostasy have been able to alarm me from boldly opposing them. My conscience bears witness with what zeal I have sought to promote the unity of thy church, if thy truth alone be the bond of peace. The agitations which have thence arisen cannot properly be charged to my account, for it is not I who have excited them. Thou knowest, O Lord, and men know it, that I have sought nothing so much as the quieting of all strife through thy Word. Yea, I would have risked my life itself to restore peace to the church. But what has been the conduct of our adversaries? Have they not every instant been hurrying to kindle the pile, to plant the cross, to draw the sword in their wrath? Have they not rejected every means of establishing peace? Hence it has arisen, that a circumstance which might have been employed to friendly purposes has ministered fuel to this fire; and although in the midst of this confusion men have judged us in very different ways, I am freed from all fear, standing as we now do before thy judgment-seat, where alone righteousness and truth together can judge us according to our conscience and integrity."

We can see from this passage, with what a good conscience he had taken the step which has cost many an awakened soul, in our own times, so severe a struggle. It also shows us, how he

already regarded himself, although still at the beginning of his career, as a leader of the protestant party. No one could have stood forth with greater confidence than that which he expressed in the words, "I have raised the banner of Christ, when his people were scattered."

The justification of the laity, who had joined the reformers, here follows: it is mainly founded upon the principle, that they could not accomplish their salvation without the Word of God, which had been taken from them. The errors of Romanism are again referred to God's tribunal; and Calvin describes the terrors of conscience which he suffered till he knew the grace of God.

"With you, Sadolet, the salvation of mankind hangs entirely upon this single thread, that they continue in the religion which they have received from their fathers. But according to this reasoning, all Jews and Saracens who die in their particular belief are saved." An answer is then given to the accusation brought against the protestant preachers respecting their supposed avarice and ambition, and their resistance to all authority, with the very just remark, that there was strife in the catholic church, and not uninterrupted peace, even before the reformation. The conclusion runs thus:—"May God grant then, O Sadolet, that you and your associates may perceive that there is no bond of unity except as Jesus Christ, who has reconciled us to God the Father, delivers us from this tumult, and unites us in the communion of his mystical body, that through his own Word and spirit we may grow together in one heart and in one soul."

We must here observe, as that which is very remarkable in the development of Calvin's spirit, the deep, inward feeling which he had of his responsibility as to the care of souls, from the moment of his accepting the pastoral office. He had already spoken three times on this subject: first, in the preface to the catechism (1538), in which he describes the anguish of his soul when the time came for his administering the Lord's Supper at Geneva; secondly, in the letter to Roux, in which he so powerfully admonishes preachers; and lastly, here in his reply to Sadolet. His conduct towards Geneva shows how strongly he felt his responsibility as a pastor. We may also quote to the same purport, the passage in his first letter to Geneva, where he describes how the teachers of the Gospel ought to be esteemed, since they derive their office not from man, but from God.

Convinced of the divine nature of his calling, to awaken and deliver souls was for him, as for Luther, a duty to which he had bound himself by an oath upon the Bible.

Another remarkable passage in reference to the duty of preachers, and fidelity to their calling, but of a later date, is found in the Commentary to Ezekiel, iii. 18. "When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity ; but his blood will I require at thine hand." He here shows how perilous an office is undertaken by those who are called to teach. "Nothing is more precious in the sight of God than souls, which He created after his own image, and whose Father and Redeemer He is. But knowing the worth of souls, and their salvation, in his sight, we may easily understand how careful prophets and preachers should be in the performance of their duties. It is as if God entrusted souls to their keeping, under the condition that they must give an account of every one of them so committed to their care. Hence it is not sufficient for them to admonish this or that one. We hear how God threatens them, if they strive not to bring all from the ways of wickedness to those of life."

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## CHAPTER XII.

### JOURNEY TO FRANKFORT.—FIRST INTERVIEW WITH MELANCTHON.

CALVIN was present at the convention in Frankfort in 1539 ; and in the following year at that in Hagenau and Worms ; at the last not simply as the companion of Bucer, but as the envoy of the city of Strasburg. He was subsequently at Ratisbon.

It was before the letter to Sadolet was finished, that we find him setting out on this journey, of which some notice exists in letters written during the March and April of this year. A passage out of a manuscript letter from Geneva shows that Calvin had already seen Melancthon at Frankfort. He had laid before him several propositions on the Lord's Supper, to examine what difference of opinion existed between them. "Ere he answered my inquiries," says Calvin, "we met each other at Frankfort ; and he proved to me that his meaning was no other than that



which my words expressed." But this near relation which was beginning to exist between Calvin and Melancthon was some time after disturbed.

The following letters contain some classical passages on Melancthon, and which show how, high as he then stood above all parties, he had adopted a correct view of the Lord's Supper; that he agreed altogether with Calvin, and only remained a Lutheran out of love to peace, freely pouring out his whole heart in quiet conversation. We learn also from the same source the difficulties which the reformers had now to encounter in respect to discipline.

Calvin after the journey to Frankfort returned to Strasburg, from which city he thus wrote to Farel, March 16, 1539.

"I had no thought of this journey till the day before I set out. Having learnt however from Bucer's letters that he could do nothing for our persecuted brethren, I immediately conceived the wish to take this journey, that nothing might seem neglected in regard to the safety of the brethren, as is so often the case in a mass of business; and that I might converse with Philip on religion and the church. Both reasons will seem of sufficient importance to you. Capito and the others also persuaded me; and to this may be added, that the journey was to be made in most agreeable society, Sturmius and many other dear friends being our companions."

The following also was addressed to Farel in March, 1539. "The emperor's ambassador ventured to propose such hard conditions, that it wanted but little to excite another appeal to the sword. He insisted upon ours separating themselves from the sacramentarians. See the art of the devil! He is not only seeking to nourish those old causes of hatred which he formerly sowed among us, but to add new grievances, like burning torches, in order to create still greater divisions. But we recognize no sacramentarians, and would live in harmony with the Swiss churches. The emperor therefore desisted, and all was so managed that a truce was agreed upon. God grant that it may be useful to the church! For my own part, I expect little from it. The elector of Saxony is of the same mind, and believes that necessity will force us into war. Against all expectation, the landgraf declares himself disinclined to war; and although he would not hold back, if he saw others go forward, yet has he disheartened those who place their main confidence in his lively and generous courage. We are now to employ our thoughts

upon the truce, during which both parties will look to the establishment of peace and union. But the enemy will do nothing but watch for a favorable moment to commence war . . . I have had a long conversation with Philip; having written to him before on the subject of our union, and sent him some articles, containing the substance of our doctrine. He has assented to them without exception, but confesses that there are those who desire something stronger, and with such obstinacy, not to say tyranny, that he was for a long time viewed with suspicion, because they saw that he somewhat wavered in respect to their opinions. Although he does not believe that an actual union can be accomplished, yet he anxiously desires that the present agreement, whatever it be, may be retained, till the Lord bring both parties to the unity of his truth. So far as he is concerned, do not doubt but that he thinks as we do.

“It would take too much time to tell you on what we have further spoken: this will one day or the other furnish us matter for a pleasant conversation. When the discourse turned upon discipline, he sighed, as all the others did; the melancholy condition of the church in this respect provoking tears rather than the hope of its improvement. But let us not believe to suffer only. Every day brings forth new circumstances, which are calculated to excite in every one the desire of improvement. Thus a short time ago, a worthy and learned man was banished from Ulm, with ridicule and disgrace, because he could no longer look patiently upon vice; all his colleagues gave him a most honorable farewell. That which occurred at Augsburg was not of a more cheerful character. It has hence become a jest, to deprive the clergy of their office and to drive them into exile; and this evil is not to be controlled, for neither people nor princes are willing to distinguish between the yoke of Christ and the tyranny of the pope. Philip therefore is of opinion that nothing better can be done, in such tempestuous times, than to yield in some measure to the storm; and he encourages the hope that, if we only preserve a little more tranquillity before the outward enemy, the favorable time will come for directing our attention to internal improvement. Capito calls God and man to witness, and swears by heaven and earth, that the church is lost, unless it be quickly delivered from such afflictions, and as he cannot perceive that any progress is made towards improvement, he wishes himself dead. But if the Lord himself has called us, as we cannot doubt He has, He will not fail to give us his blessing,

however much we may be opposed. Let us therefore leave no means untried; and if all fail, yet let us continue the struggle even to our latest breath. When I see that you so distress yourself, I wish myself with you, to give you consolation."

The following is addressed to Farel, and dated March 16, from Strasburg.

"With regard to church property, would that I could promise you any better news, though things are not at the worst. Bucer perseveres with so much resolution, that he appears to have effected something. Philip alarmed him at first with the difficulty of the attempt, but he could not restrain him. It seems however exceedingly hard to prevent the princes from thinking that this is their affair, since they manage the property of the church according to their own opinion. Some indeed are very angry at finding that they are likely to lose a booty which they had begun to regard as their own. Others, although they have no loss to fear, cannot be easily induced to run the risk of exposing themselves to the hatred of an order which, as you know, is so powerful in Germany. Bucer has shaped a proposal, grounded on the ancient custom of the church, by which both the church itself might be helped and the peace of the empire preserved. As the possessions which the canons now enjoy were bequeathed under the condition, that they should be administered by directors (*comites*), he proposes that a college should be instituted, consisting of members chosen from the nobility, to whom the property of the church should be committed in trust. But such persons should be neither priests nor canons, but married persons (*conjuges*), pledged to the church, simply by their own promise to contend for its peace with all the power they have. Since the bishop is the first person in the state, and this dignity could not be abolished without disturbing the empire, he considers that what has once before been done might again be adopted, and that in the place of the bishop some member of such a *collegium comitum* might be named, to whom the possessions now pertaining to the bishops might be entrusted, and who might have the title of Vicedominus, because he would be rather the steward than the master of the property. His office would consist in defending the church where it was most assailable, and to which duty he would be bound by a solemn oath. The remaining revenues must be devoted to better purposes than the maintenance of prebends. Among these better purposes I reckon the support of preachers, schools, charities for the

poor, and other expenses of the church. If we gain this point, we shall effect as much as is possible in these distracted times. We have hope, and great hope, that the princes will attend to this proposition. The states which see their revenues so wilfully squandered, will do all in their power to support it."

After describing the diet, and passing his opinion on the princes, expressing himself with German patriotism, he adds, "The main thing desired by the emperor was, that learned, candid men, not lovers of strife, should meet together for the purpose of discussing the principal points in dispute; that the subject should then be referred to the diet, and that thus the reformation of the German church might be accomplished according to the wish of all classes. A truce for a year was determined on, to accomplish this design. Our friends are not contented with this short truce, but wish for something more secure. Thus everything with regard to our affairs is still in uncertainty. We are not yet free from the danger of war, if the emperor proceeds. The king of England has requested that new ambassadors may be sent to his court, and that Philip may accompany them; that he may have some adviser, and so may be better able to regulate the constitution of the church. There was no doubt that they would constitute a deputation; but they would not send Melancthon, because they mistrusted the too great mildness of his disposition. He is however consistent, and does not hide his sentiments. I have had his most solemn assurance that the fear entertained of him was groundless; and certainly, as I believe I thoroughly understand his feelings, I should not be more afraid to trust him than Bucer, if we are to act with those who would wish to have anything left to themselves. Bucer burns with so ardent a desire to spread the Gospel, that he is not contented with urging less than the main points, and hence is too negligent in such as appear to him of inferior importance, although they have their weight. The king himself is but half instructed in these things; he not only prohibits priests and bishops from marrying, by very severe ordinances, and by degradation from their office, but he retains the daily mass; he upholds the seven sacraments, and has only the mere shadow of the Gospel,—a piece of patchwork, a church stuffed with puppets,—and, to proclaim the weakness of his brain to all, he will not allow a translation of the Scriptures to be circulated in his kingdom, and has issued a new proclamation forbidding the people from reading the Bible. But to let you



know that he is not doing this in jest, he has lately caused a good and learned man to be burnt, because he denied the bodily presence of Christ in the bread. The death of this excellent person is greatly lamented by all pious and learned men ; but excited as our friends are at the intelligence of this iniquitous proceeding, they cease not to feel an interest in his kingdom."

The following is extracted from a letter to Farel, dated April, 1539.

"I told Philip to his face, a short time ago, that the great number of ceremonies displeased me very much, and that they seemed to border upon Judaism. When I pressed him with my arguments, he would not contest the point, or deny that they had a great deal too many of these outward things, which were either unmeaning or useless ; 'But,' he remarked, 'we were obliged to yield this to the obstinacy of the canonists there, who clung to the old customs.' The conclusion of the whole was, that Luther had no greater love for the ceremonies which they were compelled to retain, than he had for our too great simplicity. Would to God that the worthy N. had been really aware how much uprightness there is in Philip ! he would then most undoubtedly have quickly given up any suspicion of treachery. That Bucer has always defended Luther's ceremonies, does not arise from his affection towards them, or because he wishes to introduce them. Nothing can induce him to admit the Latin chanting ; he has also a horror of images ; the other things he partly regards with contempt, or with indifference. There is however no reason to fear that what has once been abolished will be ever restored ; Bucer's only desire is that we should not separate from Luther on account of these altogether trivial outward usages. That cause of the dispute is certainly in my opinion not very rational ; there is nothing in the league with the Germans which can offend a pious heart ; why do they not, I ask, combine the forces which the Lord has given them for the common defence of the Gospel ? The emperor wishes that the church property should continue in the hands of the clergy till the termination of the truce. Our friends assent to this, on the condition that provision be made for the schools and churches, and on this they insist without variation. But what will you say, when I tell you of the noble resolution of this city ? On our being made acquainted with the conditions proposed by the emperor, that the covenants entered into after the assembly at Nuremberg should be regarded as null, and that no others

should be entered into by our friends, but that both parties should preserve their position till the German church, according to a too common mode of speaking, had reformed itself,—a decree of the senate was immediately passed, in which the members declared, that they would sooner see their wives and children murdered before their eyes, all their possessions and goods destroyed, and their city burnt to the ground, yea, die even to the last man, than acknowledge this law, so calculated to stop the progress of the Gospel. Think, dear Farel, whether we should not be unjust to such a people, if we charged them with idleness, when they can neither by threats nor danger be brought to forsake the right way even a finger's breadth. Thus there is every appearance of an approaching conflict."

We have now to speak of the renewal of the affair with Caroli, and of Calvin's very characteristic conduct on the occasion.

Dr. Caroli\* having found no comfort in the catholic church, to which he had returned, sought again the evangelical party. Farel, according to his truly noble disposition, hoped to shame this man by his Christian kindness, and, though he had been charged by him as the greatest of heretics, met him with uncalculating generosity, and received him at once into the church. In a conference at Nuremberg he spoke to him, as a friend, of his manifold sins: Caroli testified repentance, declared his renunciation of his former errors, and acknowledged the doctrine of the evangelical party as orthodox.

But the Neufchatel class would not acknowledge him as a brother, and Farel was blamed for his mildness. Those of Bern demanded that Caroli should make a formal apology for his conduct. When Caroli proudly rejected such a reconciliation with the Bernese, Farel entreated for him as for a friend; he sought to gain him as a Christian. Caroli went to Strasburg, but conducted himself there in so unchristian a manner, that even Farel's gentleness could no longer endure it, and he reproached him accordingly. Caroli next went to Metz, where he still continued to correspond with Farel and Calvin, seeking some good appointment through their influence. Calvin once more sought, both by mildness and severity, to accomplish his actual conversion, but to no purpose; enmity, darkness, and love of the world filled his vain heart. He again reconciled himself to the catholic church, sought his happiness in the world, and died in

\* Kirchhofer, t. ii. 12.

an hospital at Rome, of disorders brought on by his licentious life. Several of Calvin's letters refer to these circumstances; I shall extract only such passages as seem to characterize the writer.

CALVIN TO FAREL.\*

"Henry came yesterday evening. After dinner I went to Bucer, and read him your letter: it delighted him greatly, especially when he saw your mildness towards Caroli. He acknowledges that it would be difficult for him to act with such forbearance; it is to be feared that when he comes to Basel, Grynæus will give him a somewhat harder reception."

CALVIN TO FAREL.†

"I have not been inclined to write till the business with Caroli was settled. My friends employed themselves about it, but it greatly annoyed me. Bucer did not think it right that I should take part in any discussion till there was some prospect of peace. To this I readily gave my assent; for there was some fear that I might speak a little too severely, and so give occasion to greater disturbance. It was also well that he might have free scope to rail against us. As far as I can learn, they began with doctrine: thus, they asked him whether he believed that there was anything in our preaching injurious to the faith? They then proceeded to speak of his apostasy, which was in fact the knot of the whole question. He sought in all possible ways to excuse himself, and pretended that he acted towards us from the beginning in the most upright manner, not at once accusing us, but desiring us as a friend to subscribe the three creeds. Not only, he said, did we reject this proposal, but we treated the creeds themselves with laughter and contempt, notwithstanding the respect in which they have ever been held, as of constant authority in the church, by all believers. Our friends answered, that this at least could have been no reason for his going over to the papists. At last, after a hard conflict, they exhorted him to repentance. When I was summoned, I replied to every one of his accusations, and described the whole affair from the beginning. With regard to the creeds, our defence was more difficult; for it seemed wicked in us to reject that which is above all contention, and which is recognized by the consent of the universal church. But it was easy for us to prove that we did

\* Sept. 1539. MSS. Gen.

† Oct. 8, 1539. Stras. MSS. Gen.

not reject, much less despise them, but only refused subscription, that he might not accomplish that which he had in his mind, a victory over our authority as pastors. Something hateful however still remained behind."

"I now made known the main cause of the whole quarrel, and described it in such order, that any one might easily see that we were not the authors of the evil. Never did I so plainly discover how our friends the Bernese, whom you know, had blackened us by their accusations. Of our own party, there was not one who entertained any doubt of our innocency. Still they pressed me on the subject of the creeds, and on our refusing to subscribe them; this however did no harm, and we stood acquitted of a great suspicion. Notwithstanding, they one and all disapproved of our resolution. All this took place in the absence of Caroli. Bucer then wished me to write down all that in which he erred; but I could not do this, for he always found some means of eluding us, or of softening his errors. When I saw that I did not go forward, I stated that I would not accuse him, and that it would be sufficient if he simply confessed from his heart that he had erred.

"Some articles were then set forth, on many points of which he expressed his dissent, and which at his request were struck out. I received them, as thus prepared, late in the night. When I read them, I was so astonished, that I cannot remember to have felt so much pain this whole year. The next morning I called Sturmius to me: I explained to him the cause of my distress. He spoke with Bucer: they begged me to come to Matthias' house, that I might let them know what troubled me so much. Here I greatly sinned, for I had no moderation. Suppressed indignation took such possession of my spirit, that I let my bitterness stream out on all sides without restraint.

"And there would indeed have been good cause for anger, had I but acted with moderation. I complained, that when everything was finished in respect to Caroli, and the affair was at an end, they sent me these articles to subscribe, and pronounced them good without giving me a hearing; that they had already formed their own conclusion, and now demanded my assent, which if I refused they would account me an enemy. But the thing which chiefly moved me was, that Caroli said therein, that he attributed to the Lord those sufferings by which he had been driven to apostatize.

"The conclusion of my speech was, that I would rather perish



than subscribe. Such was the anger now displayed on both sides, that I could not have been more severe against Caroli himself, had he been present. At length I ran out of the dining-room. Bucer came after me, and having softened me by his words, returned to the rest. I said that I would still consider the subject before I gave my last answer. When I came home, I experienced a most violent struggle, and had no other consolation than sighs and tears. What distressed me more than all was, that you were the cause of these sufferings. Again and again, they objected to me your mildness, and the readiness with which you received Caroli into friendship, while I manifested inexcusable obstinacy in refusing to be moved by such an example. Bucer assumed all possible characters, in the hope of softening me; but it was your example which more than all furnished him with arguments against me. You can scarcely defend your want of thought, or too great facility, and, to speak plainly, who would not wish you to act with greater earnestness, resolution, and sobriety?

"Suffer me to console myself, while I accuse you of a fault which has caused me so much suffering. If I could have summoned you to me, I would have concentrated against you the whole of the anger which I expended upon others. When I was somewhat collected, I called Jacobus to me, and asked him what had taken place. He told me many things which still more excited me. I therefore wished the passage to be pointed out in which he cast the guilt of his apostasy upon others, and that the conditions should be distinctly stated under which you re-admitted him into the church at Bonneville. I could have done better, had you not been a hindrance to me. Attribute it to yourself therefore if things go wrong. In the first place, you were reconciled to him without that reflection which ought to have been employed; and you persuaded yourself to act, as if he had openly and solemnly confessed his sin and his repentance. In the next place, you have not plainly stated to me all that occurred. Now, since we have received him again, we must treat him with kindness; as we have not been willing to reject him, we must do all we can to retain him. This can only be accomplished by your preventing any of your associates from showing him contempt. Continue to exercise the mildness which you exhibited so prematurely.

"As I know you do not distrust my asperity, I will not apologize for the rudeness with which I treat you.

"With respect to Sadolet's letter, do what you please; only let me know what you do."

## CALVIN TO FAREL.\*

"Forgive me, my beloved brother, that I have written nothing since that stormy letter, which my still fresh indignation in its first glow forced from me. I no longer know exactly what I wrote; but this I know, that I was not very moderate, for the only comfort which I had in my anguish was to quarrel with you, who by your inconsiderateness had exposed me to this inconvenience. Now you excuse yourself, long and broad, as to the point in dispute; but although you seek to defend what you have done, your only true defence must consist in renouncing it.

"You say you are not the church! but who will suppose that you express anything but the opinion of the church? On what conditions he was received, you will see by the acts. What I promised him I will fulfil, if he remain faithful to his own promise: if he prove untrue, then I am free, for I have given my promise conditionally."

## FROM ONE OF CALVIN'S LETTERS TO PETER VIRET.†

"According to custom I have to bear the whole load of hatred."

Caroli however had soon trifled away the confidence of the Strasburg church, and Calvin writes to Farel:—

"I adjure you, dear brother, if I quarrel with you, scold you, am angry with you, accuse you, take it all as if you were doing it to yourself. With regard to Caroli, God will soon so order things, that if an error has been committed it will be corrected. Our friends affirm that it might have been more easily arranged, but as the force of discipline among us is not what it ought to be, they have been compelled to treat him with more forbearance than they wished."

Calvin proposed, even in the year 1543, as we see by his letters written in that year from Strasburg, to contend with Caroli. The latter avoided the disputation. Calvin wished to compel him to meet him. Farel in the mean time set out, Caroli having entreated him to be present, as on an affair of life and death. Farel rebuked and admonished his opponent with force and dignity. Calvin writes to the council: "He shows himself more

\* Oct. 27, 1539. MSS. Gen.

† Oct. 8, 1539. MSS. Gen. Feb. 6, 1540. MSS. Gen.

arrogant than ever; and so much the more, because he trusts that, in the presence of the emperor, he will not be obliged to enter into a discussion. It was his wish to escape beforehand." But the council of Metz would not permit the discussion to take place, and Farel did not see Caroli again.

The evangelical divines assembled at Hagenau, where the diet was then held, on June 8th, 1540. Melancthon remained sick at Weimar. King Ferdinand had already entered the city and was secretly endeavoring to excite the catholic powers to take arms against the protestants, but in vain. Luther was discontented with this convention, on account of the lukewarmness with which the affairs of the reformation were treated. He complains of this in a letter to the duchess Catharine of Saxony. The religious conference at Worms was determined upon soon after this. He describes the diet in a very characteristic manner, and, as usual, strikes the nail on the head, when, writing to his wife, he says, "The diet at Hagenau is mere rubbish to me; it is so much trouble and labor lost, so much useless expense."\*

Calvin travelled to Hagenau for his amusement; he describes the circumstances of his journey with much liveliness in a very interesting letter to h. v. Taillis of Strasburg. At the same time he shows how clear a view he took of the political subterfuges and intrigues of the different parties; how correctly he estimated the various relations of the German states, recognizing at all times thereby the power of divine Providence over all human contrivances.

"It was the intention of our adversaries to augment their own confederacy, and to lessen ours; but there is hope that God may alter the chances. Whatever may be, our friends are seeking, as far as possible, to enlarge the kingdom of Christ, and think not for a moment of turning aside. We cannot tell what it may please the Lord to order for us. One part of our adversaries desire nothing but war. The emperor however is too much engaged to venture upon anything further; while the pope, on his part, would not hesitate to employ himself in it, having already offered by his ambassador three hundred thousand ducats for a beginning. If all who have not yet received our doctrine would agree to attack us, the emperor would not hesitate to give the sanction of his name; and this would be only to break the forces of Germany, to subdue the country itself the more easily. But there is a great obstacle to this: it is, that the electors are

\* De Wette, t. 5. 298.

with one consent determined to settle all dissensions amicably, and without an appeal to arms. The duke of Saxony and the marquis of Brandenburg are on the side of our friends, and can therefore do nothing against their cause."

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### CALVIN'S TREATISE ON THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE opinions of the reformers on the subject of the Lord's Supper were many and various. According to Zwingli's first idea, the bread and wine are only signs and memorials, to remind us of the Lord's death; but in his last confession, in 1531, he speaks also of a spiritual enjoyment of the substance.\* According to Luther, the very substance itself, as occupying space, is received both by the worthy and the unworthy, because the body of Christ is drawn down into the sacrament. Calvin's view is, that the soul of the communicant raises itself towards heaven by faith, and by the instrumentality of faith unites itself with the substance of the Lord. When this organ of faith is wanting, there is no enjoyment of the body and blood; and the unworthy, therefore, has not partaken of the sacrament, because the means necessary thereto are absent.

It has been objected against him, that he sought an alliance with the Swiss from political considerations, or from the mere desire of unity, and that on this account he gave up his original convictions, which were more in accordance with the doctrine of Luther. But this accusation is not just: every one who knows his independent, faithful spirit will acquit him of such conduct: his conscience and belief exercised supreme control over him in this respect, as in all others, and not the dry calculations of prudence. In the same manner he set forth, and supported to the end, from pure conviction, his theory of predestination; and this he did against all the opposition of parties, against both Lutherans and reformed. If therefore we must esteem him because he always desired to establish unity, so must we also regard this endeavor, not as bearing a political, but a religious character.

\* See note in Appendix.



Planck,\* in other respects, bears willing testimony to the high deserts of Calvin, and defends him against the Lutheran zealots; but he seems to support this accusation, when he observes, that Calvin, in the year 1548, was doubtful whether he should publish a writing on the Lord's Supper, and wrote to a friend,† requesting him to say whether the publication of such a work would be advisable and prudent. Planck must however have remarked, that this uncertainty has no reference to his convictions, but to the question, whether it was the fitting time to bring out such a work. His belief stood firm, grounded as it was from the beginning on the Scriptures. He was only anxious to make a cautious use of circumstances to secure its acceptance.

In the first edition of the 'Institutes,'‡ as well as in the second, and also in his treatise on the Lord's Supper, he speaks of an enjoyment (*vere et realiter*) through faith, and therefore rejects both Zwingli's doctrine, and, still more strongly, that of Luther, on the real presence. Other expressions, of the same date, prove equally with what a conscientious profession of faith he held to his convictions; since when Bucer and Melancthon had drawn up a formulary of belief, with the view of uniting catholics and Lutherans at the diet of Ratisbon,§ he declared himself against this species of double-mindedness, and throughout his life protested against Melancthon,—discontented that one who thought as he did should, from the mere human fear of Luther, dread to declare his sentiments. So far was this the case, that his earnest and pressing exhortations interrupted, in the end, his connection with Melancthon. Calvin had no wish to establish unity except by lawful means and from inward conviction.|| Even in the year 1535 he had expressed his opinions in the most open manner. It is true however that the two parties were not immediately united in the mediating view which he took. He pertained now to a church which was commonly regarded as Lutheran, after it had given its assent to the Augsburg confession, although its catechism of 1527 plainly expressed the middle view; while Calvin himself, during the controversy with

\* Lehrbegriff, B. V. t. ii. s. 5-13. Compare Rretschneider, s. 83.

† Ep. 92.

‡ Planck, s. 10, remarks, that the Lutheran theologians desired to force the world into the conviction that Calvin, till the year 1549, wished to be considered as agreeing altogether with the Lutherans. It appears, therefore, that they had not seen the first edition.

§ Ep. ad Far. 1541. Ed. Amst. p. 17.

|| Peter Martyr, who also would not join with Bucer, agreed with him.

Caroli, set forth a statement of his doctrine on the Lord's Supper, which was acknowledged in Switzerland to be perfectly orthodox. In the year 1539 he was present at the convention at Frankfort: in the following year he attended that at Hagenau; and was now sent formally to Worms as the deputy of Strasburg. Thus, according to Planck's remark,\* people were accustomed to regard him as a Lutheran theologian; and even the Swiss were doubtful whether he had not definitively declared himself in favor of the Lutheran doctrine. "Many," says Lavater,† "were offended, because Calvin seemed to espouse opinions which were contrary to those of the Zurich ministers." Adam says:‡ "Many considered that Calvin differed in opinion from the Zurich divines on the subject of the Lord's Supper, and that he favored consubstantiation." Farel's indiscretion, and the circulation of his letter, in which he speaks of Luther's friendly greeting, and the joy which he felt thereat, was calculated to awaken considerable distrust. But this appearance of doubt shows that Calvin, at the same time, must have expressed by other channels other sentiments. This was actually the case both with Peter Martyr and with him. Even the confession which Calvin, with Farel and Viret, subscribed at an earlier period, shows the conflict which he experienced in order to keep himself further from the Lutheran doctrine of the real presence than from Zwingli's view of the mere symbolical presence. He there distinctly declares, that the believer is actually fed in the sacrament with the substance of the body and blood of Christ, and is quickened by the enjoyment thereof. Against the Swiss he asserts, that in the Lord's Supper we have not mere signs, but under them a true communion of the body and blood of Christ.

In the same manner, he prudently protests against the notion of an actual and local presence; affirms that the Holy Spirit only can effect communion; and that a spiritual participation of the sacrament can be enjoyed by those only who have faith.

Calvin openly declared his opposition to the Lutheran doctrine of the bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament, in the treatise of which we are here more particularly speaking. The cause of the strife referred to is stated at the end of the work; and Calvin, as we shall see, speaks as decidedly against Luther himself, as against his opponents.

\* Lehrbegriff, B. V. t. ii. s. 5-13.

† Leben Bullingers, s. 489.

‡ Hist. Sacr. p. 98.

But we have still to explain why he was regarded as a Lutheran divine. The Strasburgers, who might be considered as such, had never received all the Lutheran dogmas, but had only affirmed, in opposition to the Swiss, that the body and blood of Christ were received according to the substance (the expression in the Augsburg Confession), and inclined rather to the right notion, which they had already stated in their decision respecting the confession set forth by Calvin, Farel, and Viret, in the year 1537, not, as Planck affirms, in 1539, at Strasburg. According also to the Wittemberg Confession, it seems to have been admitted, that a spiritual presence only of the substance of Christ was to be looked for in the sacrament. Melancthon also desired to introduce the common definition of a substantial presence, and to leave the rest to private judgment. Luther himself even seems to have become much milder in regard to this doctrine; and hence Calvin was admitted, without opposition, as a deputy in the convention.

It is worthy of remark in what a friendly manner Luther expressed his judgment of Calvin at this time. Calvin speaks of this in a letter to Farel.\* "Erato, one of our calcographers, is just returned from Wittemberg. He brings a letter from Luther to Bucer, in which are the words, 'Greet in my name with great respect Sturm and Calvin, whose little treatises I have read with particular satisfaction.'" There is here a parenthesis in Calvin's letter, which he has struck through with his pen. The words are: "Now, remember what I say on the subject of the Lord's Supper. Consider Luther's frankness. It is easy to see what little reason they have who so obstinately separate from him. Philip however wrote thus :† Luther and Pomeranus have sent their greeting to Calvin and Sturm. Calvin stands in high favor. But Philip afterwards expressed himself thus by the messengers: 'Some, in order to excite Martin, had told him that he was rendered hateful to his own party by my means.' He therefore read the passage through, and felt without doubt that he was here attacked. At length he said: I hope he will one day think better of us. It is right however for us to bear something from so excellent a spirit."‡

There is here another parenthesis, which Calvin has struck out:—"If we be not subdued by such moderation, we are rocks.

\* Nov. 20, 1539, MSS. Gen.

† De Wette, T. V. s. 210.

‡ Calvin is proud of this distinction: it is the only place in which Luther speaks so particularly of Calvin.

I am myself shaken, and have therefore prepared an Apology, which will be inserted in the preface to the Epistle to the Romans. If you have not yet read what Philip has written on the authority of the church, I wish you to do so. You will see he is much more judicious than he appears in other writings." Calvin intended perhaps to say "more courageous."

This passage is very remarkable, for it shows that Luther in reality was not so irritable, that, pleased as he was with Calvin's work, others could excite him against him.

What could those *libelli* have been in which Calvin spoke against Luther, when he had not yet written on the Lord's Supper? The work 'De Cœnâ' was not published so early as the year 1539, and first appeared in French, which Luther probably did not read. It was not published in Latin till 1545, when he certainly read and praised the work.\* It was consequently in the first edition of the 'Institutes' that Calvin expressed himself as opposed to the doctrine of the real presence.

For the rest, Farel, in the fulness of his joy, had immediately published these words of Luther. Calvin scolded him for not keeping back his letter, and for having imprudently started up at the mention of Luther's greeting, so that the news of his behavior had travelled as far as Bern.† This was very characteristic of Farel, who acted without consideration.

I shall quote some other passages from Calvin's letters on the Lord's Supper, and first from one addressed to Farel,‡ which shows how the Swiss were at this time regarded at Wittemberg. The Strasburgers occupied a middle position, and Calvin was rather inclined to the Lutheran party. According to his opinion, the Zurich brethren had not pursued a right course.

"I have repeated your admonitions to our brethren here, and they have received them with good feeling, for they know from whom they come, and see plainly that dangers exist. They will therefore in these stormy times act with due consideration. The advice which you give respecting a union with the church at Zurich is of such weight, that you cannot tell with what earnestness the matter is treated on our side.

"But the brethren at Strasburg dare not hope to accomplish so speedy a reconciliation: they remember too well how they were received there, and sent back, and what reports were afterwards circulated respecting their proceedings, and what letters

\* Hospinian, Hist. Sacr. P. II. p. 178.

† MSS. Gen. Jun. 21, 1540.

‡ Feb. 26, 1540. MSS. Gen.



were written. When the brethren could not effect anything themselves, they appealed to the good feeling of those who enjoyed any degree of respect or favor at Zurich, to do what they could to re-establish sentiments of peace, or at least of moderation. Bullinger however in the mean time showed that letter, in which he reckons among the hindrances to the Gospel the influence of certain changeable and Proteus-like natures, under which appellation he points his finger, as every one knows, at our friends. But they remained silent, and overlooked this unworthy treatment, till Erasmus, one of the Zurich preachers, arrived here. We complained to him, but with great mildness. No soothing word however was returned; but not long after, Bibliander, with their knowledge, wrote to Sturm, stating that we had disturbed ourselves with false suspicions; that it was not Bullinger's intention to join too closely with Bucer, but to combine with those out of Wirtemberg who favored peace; and that Bucer had been told to his face at Zurich what was considered necessary. To speak the truth, however, we have not ceased to be their friends, although they treat us as enemies; and if you knew with what moderation our brethren act, it would grieve you to require anything further of them. The good people irritate themselves when any one ventures to praise Luther above Zwingli, as if the Gospel could be lost to us if Zwingli's fame was diminished. And yet no injustice would be done to Zwingli; for if Luther and he be compared together, you yourself know how immeasurably higher the former stands. I am not pleased therefore with Zebedei's song, in which he shows that he supposed Zwingli could not be praised according to his worth, without his saying that it would be sin to hope for a greater man. It is unworthy of a man to revile ashes and a shade, but it is ungodly not to think honorably of so great a man. Still there are proper limits to our praise, and he has gone far beyond these. So little indeed do I agree with him that I consider there are many greater men than Zwingli; I hope there will be still more, and I wish all may be greater. I ask you, dear Farel, if any one had exalted Luther, would not the Zurichers have cried out as if Zwingli had been martyred? The fools! you will say. . . . But all this is only whispered in your ear.\*"

\* Calvin goes further even than Martyr in condemning Zwingli. In a letter to Viret (Mss. Goth.), he says, "I allow you to think as you do of Zwingli's writings. I have never read them all. He probably towards the end of his

In the following passage from a letter to Farel\* he says: "I am curious to see what the agitation now existing in Geneva will effect for us. The affair will, I hope, be decided in some way before you arrive. Germany, as usual, stands uncertain, looking for great things to come. Nobody indeed doubts that the emperor is meditating important measures. Our representatives are now at the meeting at Smalcalde, where, for the interest of both parties, they will advise them to stand prepared for either a learned controversy or for war. God has manifested his mercy towards us in this, that the three episcopal electors have united themselves with us to protect their fatherland, rather than take part in the slightest matter with the emperor. Our little church supports itself as usual. Hermann† is again received into communion; and is, if I err not, altogether sincere. He acknowledges that there is no salvation out of the church, that the true church is with us, and that it was apostasy therefore to establish a new sect separate from the church. For this offence, which he acknowledged, he prayed forgiveness. He submitted to be instructed on the subject of free-will, the divinity and manhood of Christ, the new-birth, infant baptism, &c., and accepted our doctrine. He paused a little when the discourse referred to predestination, almost agreeing with me, but finding it difficult to distinguish between conscience and pre-science. He prayed however that this might not be made a hindrance to the admission of himself and his children into church communion. I gave him my hand, in the name of the church, and with that forbearance which ought to be exercised towards one who asks for forgiveness. After this I baptized his little daughter, now rather more than two years old. If my judgment be not altogether deceived, he is a pious man. When I admonished him to help others on the right path, he replied, 'The least that I can do is to labor as much for the edification of the church as I did before for its destruction.' Johannes also, who is at Ulm, has manifested repentance. But, to prevent us from boasting of these victories, the Lord has humbled us in a thousand ways. Then the circumstances of the church are nowhere better than there where you say they are most miserable. But in all these lamentable affairs, the consolation is still left us,

life retracted and corrected what first escaped him carelessly. But I remember how profane his opinion appears concerning the sacraments in his early writings."

\* MSS. Genev. Feb. 26, 1540.

† An anabaptist, who had given rise to some conversation in Geneva.

that we are not unprofitably serving God, even when as individuals we seem to be wasting our labor. The letters which I have written to the brethren, deliver, if you see good; if not, send them back, and see that they are taken care of. Greet every one particularly in all our names, and in the most friendly manner, but still I wish you to greet them especially in my own name. Farewell, my best and most pious brother! All greet you with much affection, especially Capito, Sturmius, Claudius. Bucer is absent. All agreed in giving me the commission to answer you, as I had communicated to them your admonition; and so far are they from being aggrieved at your warning, that, on the contrary, their reverence for you, great as it was before, is much increased. Still again, my soul, farewell! I have often already fallen asleep, but cannot leave off writing."

A letter to Bullinger,\* after some passing apologies for the writer's long silence, contains a powerful exhortation to unity.

"What, dear Bullinger, should more anxiously occupy us in our letters, than the endeavor to keep up brotherly friendship among us by all possible means? We see how important it is, not only for us, but for the whole Christian church, that all those should keep together in the profession of the truth, to whom the Lord has committed ability to be useful in his church. Satan has a view to the same object, for while he is plotting in all ways the ruin of Christ's kingdom, for nothing is he more anxious than to sow dissension among us, and to estrange us from each other. It is our duty therefore to resist his arts, and the more the enemy strives to break the bond of our union, with so much more resolution and diligence to employ ourselves in preserving it. Thus it is obviously our duty to cherish a true friendship for all preachers of the Word, and especially to see that those churches in which we preach the Word of God are at peace with each other. I am convinced that our friendship, as it is, and upon the principles on which it is now founded, may be preserved pure unto our end. As far as in me lies, I will always labor to strengthen its foundations. Then, as I have ever expressed my respect for you, I have always, as it was fitting, regarded you with much affection, and shall never cease to do so. Though I do not now see that strife or enmity exists between your church and ours, yet I should be thankful to find them in closer union and friendship. Why they do not harmonize with each other, as I so greatly

\* Stras. March 12, 1540. MSS. Gen.

wish they did, I will not now venture to determine, unless we may trace it to the remains of that unhappy strife which still has too great an influence on our minds, and whence there arises so much wretched suspicion. Our own party is most anxious to cultivate brotherly kindness, and desire no other bond of union than the pure truth of God. Of Capito's uprightness, well known as it is to you, I will not say much. I am ready to be surety for Bucer, and to pledge myself that no reason exists for your suspecting him. He is endowed, it is true, with remarkable penetration and acuteness of judgment; yet is there no one who labors so much as he to keep himself in the simplicity of the Word of God; nor will I say that he does not indulge in vain speculations which lead the mind astray, but rather that he abhors them. If you therefore discover any failing in him, he will, discreet as he is, and bearing things so easily, readily permit you to warn and even rebuke him. But let us at least see that you wish to have that communion with us which ought to exist among the servants of Christ. Into the dispute itself I will not enter with you; it is not of a nature to be treated properly in letters. I should even seem bold and arrogant perhaps if I ventured upon such an experiment. And yet I cannot refrain from wishing that something might occur, which would afford me the opportunity of discussing the whole matter with you in a friendly manner face to face. You know indeed that I have never been able to treat this matter with you by word of mouth, so as actually to understand what hinders a thorough reconciliation between you and them. But as I consider this obstacle, whatever it may be, as an unworthy cause of separation, I beseech you, or rather I conjure you, dear Bullinger, to let us wholly refrain from all hate and all strife, and even from all appearance of offence. Forgive my cautious anxiety. I do not express myself thus because I have any doubt of your foresight, or of your goodwill, or of your strength of soul or resolution. It is the peculiarity of love, that even when there is hope, there is yet much of anxiety. Still further, when you consider what dangers threaten us on all sides, especially in these our unhappy times, you will suffer, or rather pardon, this my simple speech. Farewell, learned and pious man! Greet all the brethren with respect,—Pellicanus, Leo, Theodosius, Megander, and the others, whom I honor truly and from my heart. I hope you will not refrain from giving me your candid advice."

Under these circumstances appeared the little work 'De Cœna.'



He published it, he says, to restore quiet to the numerous pious souls whom the late continual disputes had so confused that they knew not where to look. It forms an epoch in his life, because he now appeared for the first time as a mediator, hoping to restore peace to the distracted communities, and in this way to lay a foundation for the union of the several parties in the reformed church.

He begins with showing: 1. For what purpose Christ instituted the holy sacrament. 2. What benefit we derive from it, and how the body of Christ is given us in it. 3. The right use of the sacrament. 4. What errors attended the doctrine of the sacrament in the early ages. 5. The origin of the strife which was then agitating those who desired to build up the church by any means whatsoever.

This little work, in a good translation, might exercise at present the happiest influence in Germany, by awakening a right spirit, and putting to shame the love of strife. The old French in which Calvin wrote seems somewhat harsh, not like the Latin of Gallasius, and would find no favor in France. We shall give some extracts.

"In order to help our manifold infirmities, God has given us the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as a mirror, in which we may contemplate the crucified and risen Christ, that our sins and wickedness may be taken away. This especial consolation we receive from the Lord's Supper, that it leads us to the cross, and to the resurrection of the Lord, and teaches us that, although wicked and unrighteous, we may be accepted and accounted righteous. . . . As however the merits of Christ do not pertain to us, unless we possess Christ himself, so must he first be given to us in the sacrament. Therefore I am accustomed to say, that Christ is the matter and substance of the sacrament, but that the virtue of the sacrament is the grace and mercy which are thereby imparted to us. As the force of the Lord's Supper consists in this, that it confirms our reconciliation with God through the sufferings of Christ, and assures us that by his obedience we are made partakers of his righteousness, so must we conclude that the substance of Christ is united with the virtue of the sacrament. Thus in a twofold way is Christ presented to us, as the ground, the fountain, the cause of all merit . . . and so also the fruit of his death and suffering, as the words of the sacrament themselves show. When he calls upon us to partake of his body and his blood, he adds, that his body was given for us,

and that his blood was poured out for the forgiveness of sins ; indicating that the body and blood were not offered us as a mere form, but that fruit was combined therewith."

He now proceeds to prove still further that no fruit is possible without the substance of Christ himself. "If He gives himself to us, he gives himself so that we may really possess him. . . . Thus as the Scripture says, his spirit is our life : so he says that his flesh is our food, and his blood our drink ; and hence it is necessary that, as our life is in Christ, our souls should be nourished with his flesh and blood as their proper food." He uses the words flesh and blood, that we may recognize in them the substance of our spiritual life.

"If any one asks whether the bread is the body, and the wine the blood, I answer, that bread and wine are visible signs called flesh and blood, because they are instruments by which the Lord Jesus imparts these to us. This mode of speaking agrees with the thing ; since, though we can neither with the eyes nor with the mind comprehend the communion which we have with the body of Christ, yet is this exhibited to the eye. We may adduce a familiar example. When God willed that his Spirit should appear at Christ's baptism by John, he showed him under the form of a dove. John relates that he saw the Spirit of God descend. If however we carefully consider the subject, we shall find that he saw nothing but a dove, the essence of the Holy Spirit being invisible. But as he knew that this appearance was not a mere form, but the most certain sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit, he clearly stated that he had seen him, that is, seen him in such a manner as was possible. And thus it is that we must say that, in the communion which we have with the body and blood of Christ, a spiritual mystery is involved, which can neither be seen by the eye nor comprehended by the mind of man."

The explanation of the sacrament thus given by Calvin, and which defines the actual but spiritual presence of the Lord, rests on such a true living faith, that it might well unite all Christians ; especially when it is added that a mystery is involved, which neither the mind nor the eye can reach.

On this point Calvin was immeasurably superior to the controversial Lutherans, who were still in the bonds of catholicism, and whose otherwise clear intelligence was,\* in respect to this

\* It is curious to see how much attention Bossuet (*Hist. de Variations*, l. ix.) gives to Calvin's view, especially to this treatise, and with what peculiar skill and sophistry he draws from the author's statement the opposite inference

subject, very greatly confused. He speaks too in this little work, in reference to the controversy on the Lord's Supper, in so brotherly and cautious a manner, that it is joyful to hear him.

"I should wish to see this controversy (Opusc. fr. p. 219) buried in eternal oblivion ; for it is an unhappy one, and without doubt was excited by the devil, for the purpose of limiting, or altogether stopping, the progress of the Gospel. I am far from wishing to speak of it ; but because I see many pious souls in perplexity, I will briefly say what is necessary, to let them see what they have to do. Most earnestly do I beg, yea supplicate, all believers not to be offended because those who have taught the Gospel, and who have been our leaders in the return to the truth, began the dispute. It is nothing new for the Lord to allow his servants to remain ignorant of somewhat, and to fall into disputes among themselves ; not indeed that he will leave them always in error, but only for a time, in order to humble them. If one considers what darkness covered the world, when this controversy brought back the light to us, we shall wonder the less that all truth was not revealed to them from the beginning. It is even much more astonishing that they were able to deliver themselves and others from such a flood of errors. History will show that there is here no cause for vexation. When Luther began to teach, he so treated the doctrine of the sacrament as to leave the notion of the bodily presence of Christ as it was then commonly received. Whilst he rejected transubstantiation, he received the bread as the body of Christ, because united with it, and he employed strong comparisons, as unable otherwise to make his thoughts intelligible. Zwingli and Œcolampadius then stood forward ; and as they regarded this fleshly presence as an invention of the devil, and considered it impossible to pass it over in silence, a lie of six hundred years' standing, they pronounced this doctrine, particularly, because Christ was worshipped, as hidden in the bread, to be a shameful idolatry.\* But knowing how difficult it was to expel this deeply-rooted notion from the human heart, they directed all their energies against it. Christ, they said, ascended, according to Scripture, bodily into heaven. But they forgot to explain how we

to that intended ; that is, that Christ is actually present in the sacrament, and that the unworthy are partakers of his body and blood. Ed. Paris, liv. ix. p. 25.

\* Paschasius Radbertus (*liber de Corpore et Sanguine Domini*) invented the doctrine of transubstantiation in the year 831. He was opposed particularly by Rab. Maurus, J. S. Erigena, Ratramnus, and subsequently by Berengarius.

become partakers of his body and blood in the sacrament; so that Luther thought they wished to represent it as consisting of mere empty signs, without any spiritual substance. He therefore opposed them, and represented their doctrine as heretical. The controversy, once kindled, at length burst out into a flame, and was carried on with unjustifiable violence for fifteen years, during which neither party would listen fairly or tranquilly to what the other had to say. They once met, but the excitement of feeling was so great, that they separated without accomplishing their object. Instead of seeking to agree, they became further apart, each party desiring only to defend its own opinion, and to overthrow that of the other. We know in what Luther, in what Zwingli and Ecolampadius failed. Luther should have explained from the beginning, that he did not receive the doctrine of the real presence as held by the papists, nor allow that the sacrament might be worshipped in the place of God. He ought also to have refrained altogether from the use of startling and difficult comparisons, or to have employed them more rarely, and in every case so as to avoid giving offence. Lastly, he passed all the bounds of moderation, when, the controversy having broken out, he declared his opinions, and offended so many by the exceeding bitterness of his expressions.\* He should have spoken so as to make his meaning understood; but his usual passion so hurried him on, that, in order to overcome his opponents, he employed hyperbolical expressions, which were not likely to be tolerated by those who were already dissatisfied with his doctrine.

"Others, again, failed in this, that they bore themselves with such obstinacy in their struggles against the superstitions and fanatical notion of the papists respecting the real presence, and the worship connected with it, and wasted, in endeavoring to root up the error, the very strength which they should have employed in establishing that which it would have been wholesome to know. If they did not deny the truth, yet they failed to teach it as clearly as they ought. This is my meaning. When they proved, with too much violence, that bread and wine are called the body and blood of Christ, because they are signs of them they forgot that a certain truth is connected therewith. There

\* See the letter of Luther to J. Probst, in which he expresses his dislike to the Sacramentarians and Zwingli:—"Tandem id concessimus, ut articulo ultimo ponitur, ut fratres quidem non essent, sed tamen charitate nostra quæ hosti etiam debetur, non spoliarentur. Ita indignissime affecti sunt, quod fratris nomen non potuerunt obtinere, sed pro hæreticis discedere cogerentur."



was error on both sides. We should not, however, be the less anxious to fulfil our duty towards them, nor forget what grace God bestowed upon them, and has imparted to us through them. If we would not be unthankful, but bear in mind what we owe to them, we shall readily refrain from all reproachful expressions, and forgive both these and even greater things. And when we see how they distinguish themselves by holiness of life and excellency of doctrine, we shall only with great gentleness and reverence think and speak of them; and the more especially, since it pleased God, after he had taught them humility, to end, or at least soften, this unhappy strife. I have been desirous of saying this, since there is still no formulary of faith openly recognized, by means of which the peace, which is so necessary, may be finally re-established. In the mean time it must suffice, that a brotherly friendship and concord bring the churches together as far as is necessary to Christian unity. Let us all, therefore, who, according to God's ordinance partake of the sacrament in faith, confess with one mouth that we are partakers, in the truth of the substance, of the body and blood of Christ. How this is effected, let others, if they will, more clearly explain. For the rest, we must carefully hold fast, that all which is carnal ought to be banished, and that we should raise our minds to heaven, refusing to believe that our Lord Jesus can be brought from thence to be enclosed in corruptible elements. And further, that the operation of this holy mystery of our union with the Lord should not be lessened, we should believe that it takes place through the hidden, wonderful power of God. His Spirit is the means of this union, which therefore is called spiritual."

Calvin rendered a great service to the church by this clear and accurate exposition. The spirit of moderation which he thus displayed has always been seen in the French reformed church, as contrasted with that of the Lutherans. Almost every effort at union has commenced with the reformed party; and, at last, the Synod of Charenton, in the year 1631, declared that the Lutherans ought to be admitted to the communion, without inquiring as to their faith, and without any abjuration.\* This was altogether according to Calvin's feeling; it was a union in the spirit of oneness, and in the belief of Christ's presence. And the view thus taken by Calvin on the Lord's Supper has prevailed in our own times among all those believers who profess

\* Aymon, "Actes de tous les Synodes de l'Eglise." Réf. de France, t. ii. p. 501.

to cultivate union. Both churches were therefore originally brought together through Calvin's moderation, and have been, since 1631, actually united. The above-mentioned declaration of the French church was by no means the result of indifference. It belonged to a period when the subject of the Lord's Supper was regarded as of the highest importance. Bossuet observes in his *History of Variations*, that Rome trembled at the prospect of the union of the two confessions, which, at the time when Gustavus Adolphus was fighting in Germany, and all were terrified at his successes, would have exercised a most important influence. But two centuries were still to pass away before the churches could be regarded as actually bound together in the bonds of love.

This first experiment of Calvin to reconcile all opinions through spirit, love and life, without endeavoring to fathom the mystery by the understanding, may still show the right path, even in our own day, to every right-minded Lutheran in the united evangelical church. Very wise it is, that nothing definite has been said in the Liturgy on the signification of the words of Christ, and that it is left to every one to discover it according to the measure of light which he enjoys,—a moderation which, if it had prevailed in the church from the beginning, would have obviated all sacramental controversies, would have rendered the union of love possible, and have proved the working of the Saviour's prayer, "Father! I will that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."

A letter from Gaspar Liser, preacher of Nürtingen, shows how highly Calvin's love of union and peace was respected in his time. He thanks him even in the year 1554 for those efforts to secure tranquillity which are at present so little understood.

"Greatly are we delighted with that love of peace which has led you to take so much trouble in the endeavor to bury this unhappy strife respecting the Eucharist in forgetfulness. It has occupied us much, and has doubtless been to many a great obstacle in giving themselves up to Christ. But since the greater number cannot forget these disputes, your efforts must tend to reconcile the hostile parties, and lead them to peace, according to the words of Christ. And do not suppose that your time or trouble will be lost. Many who formerly loaded their opponents with curses, now think far more justly of Zwingli and Œcolampadius since they have read your book, and readily

adopt the opinion which you have clearly explained in its pages. I also thoroughly agree with you, where you say, that if Luther, Œcolampadius and others, who cannot be sufficiently admired, had not been partly influenced by false opinions, and partly embittered by the fierceness of the controversy, the affair would not have gone so far, and they might have been reconciled.\*

## CHAPTER XIV.

### THE SECOND EDITION OF THE 'INSTITUTES;' AND CALVIN'S MATURED THEOLOGICAL CHARACTER.

ALTHOUGH the edition of the 'Institutes' published in 1559 is the most perfect,† and Calvin was continually employed in the improvement of the work, yet in reality it contains nothing new, but has only gained in method, clearness and order. The Strasburg edition, therefore, of 1539, may fairly be regarded as the product of his early theological advancement. As we shall not revert to this subject, we must here compare the two editions together. The origin of the work has been already stated; and we have also spoken of the first edition, which was issued for a peculiar purpose, but contained the same doctrine.

In the preface to the Strasburg edition he speaks at once of the design of the work, which was, "so to prepare theological students for the reading of God's Word, that they might easily

\* The zealous Lutherans judged it very differently. In the writings of one Vitus Theodorus it is said, "*Quæso quid sentit Moibanus de Calvini libello de Cœna Domini? libenter dicerem quod olim Lutherus de simili quodam libello. He washes the hide without making it wet. That is an art which a fool does not possess. Principia bene mihi placent, sed quid postea dixit? Sursum corda, ad dextram Patris. These cannot agree together.*"—Barekhus, p. 33.

† I distinguish particularly three editions or revisions of the work, and quote accordingly. 1. That of Basel, 1535-6. 2. That of Strasburg, from the office of Bendelinus Rihelius, 1539. Some copies under the name of Aleuin, with seventeen chapters, and also, somewhat corrected, with twenty-one chapters, Strasburg, 1543 and 1545; and at Geneva, 1550, 1553 and 1554; all after the same plan, and little altered. 3. An entire revision, printed at Geneva, 1559, by Robert Stephanus. Calvin, according to the preface, finally corrected this edition. All the following correspond with this. Calvin translated the work, 1541, and prepared a new translation, which was furnished with an index by Marlorat, Ziegenbein, 2-13, and Clement. *Bibliot. Crit.* vi. p. 65. Gerdes. *Sc. Ant. T. II.* The French translation by Charles Icard, Brême, 1713, was reprinted by Guers at Geneva, 1818; and the German by Krummacher, I and II books, appeared at Elberfeld, 1823.

commence their labors. He had therefore arranged the subjects in such order, and had so explained them, that the reader might comprehend without difficulty what he was to find in the Holy Scriptures, and to what end he was to use all that which they taught him. In his expositions therefore he had introduced no long, dogmatical investigations. The pious reader would accordingly be spared great annoyance, if he undertook the reading of this work with judgment." Calvin adds, "My commentary on the Epistle to the Romans will explain my meaning better than words."\*

To direct attention to the excellence of this work, as an armory filled with every kind of weapon against the enemies of the Gospel, it will be sufficient to quote the sentiments of two later theologians, who, although varying in their judgment, are yet wonderfully agreed in their praise.

"While we have no work," says Bretschneider,† "by either Luther or Zwingli, in which they might have exhibited their whole doctrine reduced to a system, and accompanied by the necessary proofs, and so might have furnished a defence against unnumbered controversies, Calvin, on the contrary, at an early period, connected the truths of the reformation in a systematic form; defended every point with proofs, the strongest and most excellent known at that time; and secured them against all opposition. Of this, his justly celebrated 'Institutes' afford ample testimony,—a work which ought not to be so neglected as it is by the theologians of our times,—not even by the Lutherans. It contains a treasure of admirable thoughts, of acute explications, and fine remarks; and is written in an elegant, lively and eloquent style. The Lutheran church has only something similar in Melancthon's famous 'Locis Theologicis,' which however is not to be compared with Calvin's work for close arrangement, solidity of proof, strength of argument, and completeness of system."

F. A. Krummacher, in his preface to the translation of the 'Institutes,' supplies a deficiency in this judgment, by recognizing in the reformer not a theologian only, but a faithful Christian. "For the rest, John Calvin was a man humanly

\* This edition therefore was prepared before the Commentary to the Romans. He had had it a long time in his mind, and would, he says, have completed it earlier, but that God had for ten years kept him occupied in a wonderful manner. During that troubled period therefore he was employed with the thoughts here developed.

† Reformat Almanack.



influenced by the wakefulness and struggles of his excited times, but still more wrought upon by that which is higher than all time. How first apprehended by Christ, he apprehended Christ, and apprehended him continually more and more, he describes in his work with human words, but as a master, powerful in speech. Far from him was it to assume the character of an apostle; but, like our church, recognizing no other foundation than that which is laid, he sought to lead men back to this, and to the testimony of the apostles and prophets. Let us discover human failings and weaknesses in him and his works; of these he has accused himself without ceasing: let us object to him, as is often done, that he has indulged too largely in dialectic and scholastic subtleties, in an excessive admiration of Augustine, in bold inquiries into the inscrutable, in defining that which is indefinable, in fostering a consuming zeal for the house of God against error and false doctrine, and in giving loose to words of scorn and the scourge of his mouth. I cannot agree with those who thus judge him, nor condemn so great a man, even where I do not think or believe as he did. If faith is the highest degree of spiritual life, much higher than all understanding, the light of life will have its degrees in faith, as in knowledge. Did Calvin attain now to such an eminence in faith as few even of the elect have reached? And do we recognize the possibility and probability of this his position in a peculiar kind of self-knowledge and intelligence; so are we, at least, freed from the danger of regarding, like Festus, the true discourse and the significant words of a higher wisdom as foolishness, and from that of charging the profound advocate of Divine Providence with madness. A child is soon made familiar with the starry heavens and so forth, as to the mere surface of things; but it is otherwise with a Keppler or a Newton. The higher the position, by so much the more awful is the view into the depth below. Luther says in his preface to the Epistle to the Romans, 'Without suffering, without the cross, and the necessity of death, one can scarcely treat of Providence without offence, and a secret anger against God. Therefore it was necessary, perhaps, that Adam should die, before he could suffer this thing, and drink the strong wine. Take heed then, and drink not wine, if you be still a suckling. Every doctrine has its measure, time and age.' That the inquiries now of such a head should in like measure extend to the heights and depths of Scripture and revelation, as has not happened since, is as natural, as that the common, flat and scep-

tical exposition should lose sight of him in its descent, and clap the hands in triumph over him. The translator acknowledges that it has often occurred to him; and the reader may make himself sure of finding the same thing."

The theological spirit depends upon three qualities; namely, first, fulness of belief, or the living knowledge of the truth imparted by an inward revelation; secondly, power of understanding, capable of comprehending the given truth, of reducing the fulness of the thoughts to unity, and of distinguishing them with the sharpness of a dialectic faculty, which solves all difficulties; or makes them palpable, and of readily turning itself to controversy; and lastly, as connected herewith, exegetical talent and tact to build the edifice upon the firm foundations of the Gospel. Calvin united these qualities in a high degree, and was endowed at the same time with power and excellency of speech.

Still more clearly do we recognize the acuteness and correctness of his feeling, when we consider the rude character of that dark period, in which, without help, he so quickly discovered the right method of interpreting Scripture, and brought so pure a light to illustrate the system of dogmatics, together with such truth, earnestness and candor, that he stands much higher than many of the fathers of the church, while resting alone upon the authority of Scripture. Hence Scaliger says, "*Solus inter theologos Calvinus.*"

What still more forcibly proves the high importance of the work is the fact that, by means of translations, it soon became known and read through the whole of Europe. Icard translated it into modern French, Paschalis into Italian, Cyprian of Valera into Spanish, Thomas Norton into English. It has been often translated into German, among others by the theologians of Heidelberg; C. Agricola translated it into Dutch, and versions of it exist in the language of Hungary, in Greek, and even in Arabic.

The three most eminent opponents of this work were Pighius, answered by Calvin himself; Peter Cotton, the confessor of Henry IV., who wrote against it a work entitled 'Catholic Institutes;' and Schultingius,\* who attacked it in the work entitled 'Bibliothecæ Catholicæ et Orthodoxæ contra summam totius Theologiæ Calvinianæ in Institutionibus J. Calvini et Locis communibus Petri Martyris breviter comprehensæ.' This author

\* Born at Cologne towards the end of the sixteenth century.

attributes its celebrity to the order and method which it so remarkably exhibits. In Paris the Sorbonne ordered it to be burnt, which was no slight praise. Important moreover as are the contents of the work, it claims additional admiration by the excellency of its style. Focanus, for example, in his dissertation 'De Studiis,' where he recommends the reading of the 'Institutes,' observes—"Qui liber, non solum abundat rebus optimis, sed et nitido, puro, gravi, magnifico et latinissimo stylo conscriptus est."\*

## FIRST BOOK.

The original Strasburg edition had seventeen chapters; but in the corrected copy, which I have now before me, there are twenty-one, some being divided, and a new one added. The latter is, 'De Votis, ubi de Monachatu agitur.' Of the several chapters, the first treats of the knowledge of God as the foundation of religion, and shows whence the true rule of faith is to be derived. The second, of the knowledge of man, of original sin, of the natural corruption of man, of the weakness of free-will, of the grace of regeneration, and the help of the Holy Spirit. The third, of the law, of duty, and of the use of the law; of divine worship, of images, of oaths, and of festivals. The fourth, of vows, of monkery. The fifth, of faith; the so-named 'Apostles' Creed' is expounded. The sixth contains an explanation of the first part of the creed, and the author treats of the essence of faith, of the Trinity, of God's omnipotence. The seventh contains an explanation of the second part of the creed, and treats of the incarnation, of the death and resurrection of Christ, of the whole mystery of redemption; and an explanation of the third part, in which particular mention is made of the divine Spirit. The eighth comprehends the explanation of the fourth part of the creed, and speaks of the church, of its government, order, power and discipline; of the office of the keys, of the forgiveness of sins, and of the last resurrection. The ninth treats

\* Daniel Colonius of Leyden, in a work on the 'Institutes,' writes—

"Aureus hic liber est, hunc tu, studiosa juvenis,  
Si cupis optatam studiorum attingere metam,  
Noctes atque dies in succum verte legendo."

*Gerdes, Scrinium Antiquarium, t. ii. 467.*

So also Ancillon, ii. 67, and others.

of penitence, which, according to the author, flows from faith. The tenth is occupied with justification through faith, the merit of works. The eleventh, with the similarity and dissimilarity of the Old and New Testaments. The twelfth, with Christian liberty. The thirteenth treats of human traditions. The fourteenth (here illogically thrust in), of predestination and the prescience of God. The fifteenth, of prayer and the Lord's Prayer. The sixteenth, of the sacraments. The seventeenth, of baptism. The eighteenth, of the Lord's Supper. The nineteenth, of the five falsely called sacraments. The twentieth, of civil government. The twenty-first, of the life of men as Christians.

It would be difficult to form a whole out of these miscellaneous materials, and Calvin probably had not time to make the attempt. In the last revisal he proceeds from the Apostles' creed, and adopts the simplest plan.

Here the first book treats of the knowledge of God as Creator. The second, of the knowledge of God as Redeemer, in Christ, revealed to the fathers under the law,—to us under the Gospel. The third, not of the knowledge of God as the Holy Spirit, but practically of the means whereby we are commanded to seek the grace of Christ; of the fruits which arise therefrom, and of the consequences thereof; and, accordingly, of the work of the Holy Spirit, and of the manner in which we become partakers of grace through his mysterious operation. The fourth treats of the outward means through which God brings us into communion with Christ, and establishes us therein. These are the four parts of the Apostles' creed.

In this brief abstract no notice can be taken of the common and well-known parts of the subject, but of those points only which indicate the peculiarities of the author's system and mental character.

Calvin repeatedly declares that he had no purely scientific or dogmatic end in view in the composition of this work: it was his desire to lead good and faithful souls into the way of salvation. The scientific, theological part of the design was (as in the course of his whole life) but an addition, a subordinate appendage to the main object of his labors. He never lost sight of this great Christian end. This is his distinguishing quality, and it is evident in everything which he did. The only new thing in the last edition is that which the experience of his own soul had furnished: it contains therefore a clearer demonstration of the doctrine of the Trinity. This was occasioned by his



struggle against the Antitrinitarians, and by his controversy with Servetus, Osiander, and others who appeared at a later period. But we cannot observe without admiration the quietness and moderation which he preserves in the midst of all his warmth and eloquence, and the wisdom which he exhibits in his investigation of divine truth, except when he falls upon his own favorite dogma. For all these excellencies he was indebted to that vigorous faith which was so deeply infixed in his soul, and the power of which is again imparted to the reader. The perilous times in which he lived doubtless contributed greatly to this remarkable development of the energies of faith: the very excitement of feeling would aid its higher influences.

To accomplish his purpose, the representation of truth as it should be known to the Christian, for the edifying of faithful souls, he employed every means at his command,—the holy Scriptures, the testimony of the fathers, his own experience, his reason and his conscience, enlightened by the spirit of God.

The testimony of this blessed spirit, witnessing to the conscience of believers that the Scriptures are true (Inst. lib. i. c. 7), is his fundamental position. But reason confirms the truth of this testimony. To discover the truth by means of hermeneutical principles was not his object, but he employs, as far as was possible at that period, grammatical and historical illustrations to aid his expositions. The holy Scriptures can as plainly show themselves to be true, as a color that it is white or black, and a taste that it is bitter or sweet. The Holy Spirit is the one grand proof,—all others avail nothing without him. This heavenly feeling of conviction flows from an inward revelation. But Calvin entertained the same idea of inspiration as the Lutheran church, and opposed the notion of the anabaptists, who believed in a continued inspiration, that is, that every one may still be inspired, as the Apostles were, without the Word. His sentiments respecting the majesty of the Scriptures is powerfully expressed (c. 8). "Our hearts will become firmer, when we think that it is the majesty of the contents, far more than the sweetness of the language, which impresses us. It is not without an especial intention that the greatest mysteries of the kingdom of God are communicated to us in an altogether unattractive clothing. Read Demosthenes, Cicero, Plato; they will charm, enrapture you. But when you turn to the Scriptures, they will so pierce your heart, whether you will or not; they will impress you in so lively a manner, that the power of the philosophers

will seem to vanish in mere smoke. *Ut promptum sit perspicere, divinum quiddam spirare sacras Scripturas.*"

In relation to this subject, Calvin's letter to Cozin\* is deserving of remark. He there warns him, and plainly declares that he would never leave the way of the Gospel, nor adopt what was not to be found in it, however Cozin might besiege him with inquiries.

Calvin shows, first, how the knowledge of God was originally imparted to us by nature, but has been lost through sin and the fall. The works of God, the universe, the government of God, might make Him known to us, the author not referring in this place to the argument from reason, but man has darkened this revelation by his wickedness. Thus there now remains for him only the second revelation, the holy Scriptures. The church does not determine the authority of Scripture, the church being itself founded on Scripture; but the Spirit works in our hearts, and gives witness to the truth. Its authority is established and enlarged by the agreement of all its parts among each other,—the harmony of the Gospels, the conversion of St. Paul. What majesty and dignity it exhibits throughout! Other revelations from God are not necessary.

God, as the Scriptures teach, is spiritual and altogether separated from the material world: it is therefore impious to represent him in a visible form. He is a being in three persons. The word Trinity must, by all means, be retained. The author here proves the divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and explains the doctrine of the Trinity,—God in his entire greatness and glory.

The second chapter treats of the creation, of good and wicked angels, confutes the two principles of the Manichæans, and describes the nature of man, his power and immortality.

In the last revision he treats, in the opening section, of the being of God, having found latterly the word Trinity more and more necessary, which was not the case in the second edition; although he used it even there occasionally, and always correctly; with the same clearness showing that there is a distinc-

\* MS. Gen. "If you think you have read that I pushed forward Melancthon's agreement with me in the doctrine of predestination, you are in error. I only let fall a single word, namely, that I have a letter in his own hand, in which he says that he thinks as I do." He adds, that neither Melancthon nor he loved difficult questions or paradoxes; that nothing however should hinder him from acknowledging what he had derived from the Word of God. "Nothing could be learnt in the school of that master which was not useful." He warns his friend against theological speculation.

tion of persons, but not a division of the divine essence (cap. vi. De Fide par. 18). But in the third, he expatiates very fully on the Trinity, and on the necessity of the Word.

There is a threeness of persons in one essence ; and, with Tertullian, the threeness of persons is a certain order or economy in God, which changes nothing in the oneness of the essence. This is followed by an extended argument in proof of the Godhead of Christ and of the Holy Ghost.

The system of Servetus, against whom he no longer spoke in wrath, but rather as of an unhappy man, is examined in the first book of the 'Institutes' (c. xiii. sec. 22). Servetus regarded the Trinitarians as Atheists, because, according to him, they divided God into three parts. He supposed that the persons are only ideas, or images, which God presents to us under this or that point of view, without their actually existing in the divine essence. At the beginning there was no distinction in God ; for the Word was also the Spirit. But since Jesus Christ has been revealed as a God of God, another God has proceeded from him, that is, the Spirit. And although, as Calvin supposes, Servetus concealed his impiety in saying, that the eternal Word of God was the spirit of Jesus Christ with God, and the image of his person ; and that the spirit was a shadow of the Godhead, yet he afterwards set aside the Godhead of the Son and of the Spirit, by asserting that, according to God's good pleasure (*dispensatio*), a part of the Godhead was in both, even as the same spirit actually in us is also a part of God, and as it is even in wood and stone.

According to this, one might easily discover the difficulty which existed in the mind of Servetus, and in the march of his ideas ; the effort which he was making to think of God as in Christ, God of God manifested in time, and united with Him by the Spirit, who is also the image or reflection of God, and operating by the same Spirit throughout the world. But it appears from other places that the development of the Trinity, for the manifestation of God to man, was very imperfectly understood at that period. Sometimes God is an idea (*relucentia ideæ*), sometimes the persons are also ideas.

According to another passage, he endeavors to show that God in his wisdom, or eternal idea, willed to become visible through the Son, who however is not absolutely one with God, his existence being dependent upon God's eternal counsel. Christ and the Holy Spirit are his creatures. Then he again

speaks of parts in God. Every part is God himself. The souls of the righteous are eternal in God, of like substance. In other places again, even all created things are actually one with God. But still Servetus does not seem to have been in the way of forming a system. We shall see more of this in the third part.

The fourteenth chapter treats of the angels, which Calvin describes as ministers of God, as sublime personal beings, and not as mere energies of nature. We have here a peculiarity to remark. He again repeats the maxim, that we must speak of this dogma with sobriety and circumspection; always in dark and difficult things depending only upon Scripture, and remaining content with that which God has told us; searching Scripture itself not to satisfy a vain curiosity, but for edification. It is not God's design to instruct us by solving difficult questions, but by inspiring our hearts with true piety, with the fear of his name, with trust, innocence, holiness. Let us therefore be satisfied with this knowledge, in comparison with which all other is vain.

Calvin accordingly does not attempt to determine whether every man has a guardian angel. But as Christ says that the angels of little children always behold the face of their heavenly Father, he shows that the care of little children is committed to particular angels. And this must be taken as a certain truth, that not only does an angel watch for the well-being of every one of us, but that they all together work for our salvation, since it is said, that there is joy among them all over one sinner that repenteth. Lazarus also was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom.

This belief in angels enriched for him both life and nature. He often expresses the beautiful conviction, that they were looking upon him, and that he was sustaining his struggles in their presence.

There are also wicked angels,—personal, wicked beings,—enemies of man, murderers and liars from the beginning. God created the devil, but the evil in him comes from the corruption of his nature, which was occasioned by his rebellion. Some complain that the Scriptures do not tell us enough of the fall of the angels,—of the cause, time, and nature of that circumstance. But as all this contributes in nowise to the advancement of piety, it is better that they should be silent on the subject. It would be unfitting for the Holy Ghost to satisfy our curiosity



with such relations. With regard to the conflict between God and Satan, this is certain,—the latter can do nothing but what God permits. If we say that he resists God, yet God is the Lord of this resistance, so that it is only possible through his will or permission. The devil desires that which is wicked and opposed to God; but because God restrains him by his infinite power, he can only do that which God wills; and, whether he will or not, he serves his Creator, compelled to perform his work as often as God chooses to use him for his own ends. . . . . Thus the devils may vex believers, but can never conquer or overpower them, for God guides and holds them back. Against the wicked, on the contrary, they exercise the most dreadful tyranny, treating them as their slaves, and so forth.

It is the work of Christ, and his people, to bruise the head of the evil one. Christ triumphs over him by a continual victory. . . . But the ungodly and disbelieving are given over to Satan; and justly so, for they have fallen under the anger of God; and what have they a right to expect but exposure to divine judgment? All the reprobate have Satan for their father. As believers are recognized as children of God, because they are impressed with his image, so the wicked, bearing the likeness of the devil, are known as the children of the devil.\*

At the end of the fourteenth chapter Calvin takes a view of the great and majestic work of God, and rejoices at the lordly display.

In the fifteenth chapter man is treated of, first in his state of innocency, and then in his state of ruin. Without such a consideration we could not arrive at the knowledge of God. The original nature of man was perfectly pure and holy. Had it not been so, the majesty of God would have been spotted, and his honor would have suffered harm. To uphold this was the chief design. We must deprive worldly and carnal men of every pretence, and exalt the righteousness of God above all contradiction.

The soul is an immortal spirit, but created after the image of God, which image shines forth conspicuously in our renewal through Christ.

Two faculties of the soul are spoken of; the understanding

\* The allusion cannot refer peculiarly to a possession; for there are only children of God and children of the devil. The wicked do not give themselves as their own, to Satan, but are already given over to him.

and the will. The understanding perceives and judges among all things what we should reject or take, and the will chooses or rejects.

In this state of integrity and innocence, man, had he willed, might have attained to eternal life. Adam fell because he willed it. Constancy and perseverance were not given him, and hence he became disobedient. But yet he was free to choose good or evil. There was also originally great rectitude in his understanding and will. Such however has been the ruin produced by the fall, that the free-will is subjected to a spiritual death. The soul was free to choose the good, and God was not compelled so to create it as to prevent the possibility of its being able or willing to sin. Why God did not give it the power to persevere in innocence, remains among the secret things of his counsel. We must here exercise wisdom and caution. Man might have had, perhaps, ability to persevere, if he had had the will; but he had not the will to be able to do so. Still he deserves punishment, for he received such grace from God, that he brought upon himself, while still free, and without compulsion, the misery which he endures. But it was not obligatory upon God to give him another than this weak will, which was able to become disobedient, and by its disobedience afford an occasion for the display of divine glory.

In the second edition, he introduced in this place the whole of his argument against the free-will of man, a subject discussed more logically in the third edition, but in a later part of the work. He contends that man having lost his freedom, and now being free only to do evil, ought not to be called free.

Having thus treated of God and man, he shows how the providence and government of God are especially occupied in the affairs of the human race. By a general glance at the world, God is seen ruling all things, but so that, although He makes use of the wicked as his instruments, their guilt cannot be attributed to Him. Calvin's sense of the oneness of God is characteristically displayed in this place, and we feel the spirit of devotion which moved his soul.

God conducts all things, even those which regard the imperfections and sufferings which come from mere nature. The idea that nature shared the fall of man is not spoken of here, but is introduced in another place.

Calvin's main doctrine, Predestination, has a double hold upon

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his system ; first, that is, in the doctrine of conversion, as treated of in the third book ; and here in the doctrine of providence.\* . . . . God works supreme over all things in the world. Hence He has a part even in the actions of the wicked. Good and evil happen according to his pleasure, not merely by his permission, an expression calculated to mislead us. To take a glance at this mystery, he acutely distinguishes between the command and the will of God. What is unrighteous happens according to the will of God, otherwise it would not happen, but not according to his command. It is self-evident that the wicked man deserves punishment, because he has committed the crime, not to honor God, but knowingly against his command. All offences, however, are made to take their place in the great system of the world's government. The subjective guilt of the wicked is here instanced, but still only as he is an instrument in the hand of God.

## SECOND BOOK.

With his usual caution, Calvin takes from man, in the following discussion, all that which tends to exalt him in his own eyes. Original sin is described according to Augustine. We are polluted in the sight of God even before we see the light. The curse rests upon man from his mother's womb. In opposition to Pelagius, original sin is the inherited corruption of our nature, through which we are subject to the wrath of God, and which produces the works of the flesh. Man is closely united with his first parents, and the evil is perpetually increased, not by imitation merely, but by propagation. Paul names this sin. We ourselves are guilty and answerable for our sins. It is not the punishment of Adam's sin which we suffer, but that of our own. Our ruin must be ascribed to our perverted, not to our pure, nature, as created by God. The powers which it originally enjoyed are all wasted, and have not even the strength of a reed. Man must never place any trust in his own ability, if he would uphold God's honor and glory in all their excellence. It is a species of idolatry to ascribe more to ourselves than we possess : man destroys himself thereby. This humiliation is in the highest degree useful to us, for we find again in God all that which we have taken from ourselves. Philosophers, and almost all the

\* See Appendix.

fathers, with the exception of Augustine, speak incorrectly on this subject.

In chapter second, Calvin quotes Origen's definition, that free-will is the ability which man possesses, with the help of the understanding, to distinguish good from evil; and by the force of his will to choose the one or the other. Augustine says more plainly, that it is a power by which, with the understanding and the will, man chooses the good when he has the grace of God, and the evil when that grace is wanting. It was Calvin's conviction that man enjoys this freedom only when he is under the influence of God's especial grace, which grace God gives to the elect only by regeneration. Free-will is lost, and it is by grace alone that the elect recover their freedom to do good.

Some light remained, even after the fall, to the human understanding, in respect to earthly things, as for example, politics, economy, mechanics, philosophy, art; but not in regard to the kingdom of God. Thence it is that men give heed to laws, justice, and so forth. Thus also many noble gifts are sometimes seen in human nature. God often permits this even in ungodly men. There is therefore still some good remaining in man, but which must also be ascribed to God alone. Especially is the human understanding powerless when it attempts to examine divine things, as for example the being of God, his mercy and love towards us; salvation, and the rules which we must follow in order to live according to his law. Here the most prudent are blind, as is proved by daily experience and the statements of Scripture.

The adoption of sonship with God is only possible through the renewing of the Holy Ghost. God's law is strange to us: we can understand only the natural law. Therefore, says Paul, the heathen have their law in the heart, according to which they will be judged: but this law gives no pure or sound judgment: it exists only to deprive us of all excuse before the tribunal of God. The first four commandments are unknown to this law, and the others are not sufficient. Grace only, as the Scriptures prove, can restore us. Of ourselves we have no good thoughts. All the saints have prayed for the Holy Spirit; but even such prayer is given us by God.

Calvin here expresses himself as dissatisfied even with Augustine, who ascribes the perseverance of men, through God, not to his working, but only to his providence. This, according to Calvin, is not correct; and he shows that Augustine himself



admits that God punishes in this manner the past sins of men by hardening their hearts.

The mere wish and desire of good can in no way prove the existence of free-will, since we see that the desire of eternal life is utterly incapable of conducting us to its attainment. As the will is subjected to sin, and a slave, we must regard it as in bondage, and not as free.

In chapter three it is shown that the powers of the understanding, in the same manner as the will, are ruined and carnal. Thus man can produce nothing but what is worthy of condemnation. The virtues of the heathen are peculiar graces bestowed by God, but spotted by a vain pride. Man may fall necessarily, and yet willingly, into sin. Necessity is not compulsion. God is necessarily good; the devil is necessarily evil, not by compulsion, but according to their nature. Thus man sins necessarily, that is, according to his nature. He commits sin with his own will. There is therefore no compulsion; yet he has not a free-will. A will exists, but it is always inclined to wickedness. If a man does what is right, it is from grace; he therefore deserves punishment, because he resists, with his will, the divine grace, which would give him freedom to choose the good.

Of the way to conversion, it is said, God creates faith, and faith the will to good. Grace gives freedom. The proofs in support of these statements are drawn from Scripture and Augustine. Calvin remarks, in this place, "It is well to let it be known that I agree with this great teacher Augustine, for whom the church so properly cherishes a profound reverence."

God really hardens the heart of the reprobate, as is said in Scripture. But He is righteous, and does it as a punishment for past sins. He gives the heart up to Satan for the destruction of the sinner. Satan, and not God, has led men to wickedness. In things which are indifferent, that is, neither good nor bad, and pertaining rather to this than to another life, some writers have supposed that we are entirely free. But Calvin, carefully considering the consequence, asserts that we are even in these things under the guidance of divine grace and providence; against the lax opinion of the Lutheran church, which, we know not why, admits of a free-will "in affairs civil and natural." This is illustrated by examples.

Pelagius and the new Pelagians are fundamentally opposed. A characteristic answer is returned to the objection that God would

not have given us a law had he not been free. He has given it, says Calvin, that we may learn to consider our weakness and incapacity, and to pray to him to give us strength to fulfil it. But this system of doctrine is not allowed to disturb the force of practical precepts; for it is continually said to man, Be active, work by the grace of God! The grace of God is everywhere introduced.

This doctrine, which is so closely united with that of election by grace, was fully exhibited in the second edition.

Since man was altogether lost, and had no strength in him, he must necessarily seek his salvation in Jesus Christ. Calvin's words are here very impressive and beautiful. "The knowledge of God himself would be wholly useless to us, if we did not know Him as a Father and Redeemer in Jesus Christ. Partakers as we are in Adam's rebellion, wherever we cast our eyes, the curse of God appears before us. It has been poured out upon all creatures on account of our offence; it encompasses heaven and earth, and keeps our souls in a state of horror and despair. Although God affords on all sides evidence of his goodness, yet we cannot learn from the contemplation of the world that He is our Father, for our consciences convince us that we deserve to be punished and rejected, and that we are unworthy to be called his children. The knowledge of God can bring neither the Jew nor the heathen to a state of salvation without the Redeemer. A law was given to the people of old to guide them to the hope of salvation, till the coming of the Lord."

Calvin next shows in what sense the law was abolished, and gives a full exposition of the ten Commandments. He speaks also of the great commandment, of the relation and similarity of the old and new Testaments, of Christ as man, of his two natures, his threefold office, and his death.

God, he continues, finds in man nothing but what is hateful and worthy of condemnation, till we are justified. We are redeemed through the obedience of the Lord. His offering, that is his death, was voluntary. He struggled as man. Two thoughts here occur, which are well calculated to afford us consolation and to strengthen our faith. They are these, that Christ was reckoned among the transgressors, and freely took their place, because he undertook to die not for righteousness but for sin. His judge himself pronounced him innocent. Hence He paid a debt which He did not owe. This is our absolution. All that could make

us appear guilty before God was borne by Christ, so that He suffered the punishment which should have fallen upon us. Our faith in this substitution must give us courage, whenever doubts and fears torment our minds.

The death upon the cross involves also another mystery. As the cross was accursed in the sight of men and by the law of God, so Christ took upon himself the curse which belonged to us; in the same manner as the sin-offering in former times. Hence He bore the whole curse of sin. But He was not destroyed by this curse: on the contrary, He has destroyed the curse. Thus, faith finds the absolution of our sins in the condemnation of Christ, and the blessing in the curse.

### THIRD BOOK.

The Holy Ghost first produces faith, but only in the elect. If others feel the goodness of God, their knowledge is only dark and vain; the light enlightening them soon vanishes. From the children of God, on the contrary, it can never be taken. True faith is here described with great clearness. In the second chapter he speaks of the fight of faith; the beginning of faith; as soon as this even remotely exercises its influence upon us, we immediately behold the face of God, and discover how mildly and friendly it is directed towards us; still indeed at a great distance, but so surely discerned that we know for certainty we have not erred. Then we continually approach nearer and nearer.

Faith is a steadfast confidence. An excellent explanation is here given of the objection, that all the saints have been deeply and vehemently shaken by the greatness of their temptations and struggles, as David for example. We do not suppose, he says, that faith necessarily brings with it such an extraordinary degree of conviction, that no doubt can ever exist, or that fear can exercise no influence. On the contrary, we say that believers are in a state of constant strife against their own unbelief; so far are we from supposing that their minds enjoy an uninterrupted deep repose, exposed to no storms. But still we assert, that however they may be assailed, they never lose that firm trust which they originally obtained from the mercy of God.

That which follows on the struggles of David is very noble. The faith of the elect is invincible. If the believer fears, he casts

himself into the arms of divine mercy ; if God pursues him, he still hopes in him. He bears not with disbelief ; he strives against it, and continues the conflict till it yields to his attacks. Still in this life we never attain to such a degree of happiness that faith may fill all the passages of our soul, without leaving a single opening.

Penitence which springs from faith is a change of life, so that the image of God is again impressed upon us ; the fruit of penitence.

The sin which is never forgiven consists in the rejection of God's Word, against the teaching of conscience. God casts away such souls, because they pertain to the condemned. Confession before a minister is indeed allowed, but it is to God only that it is really necessary to confess. The Christian life is described in a very edifying and practical manner. Good works are necessary, but they in nowise justify. Justification is the imputation of the merits of Christ. St. James spoke only of the activity of justifying faith. Here follows the doctrine of Christian liberty, and the very beautiful and simple explanation of prayer, which must comfort every believing soul ; as must all doctrines especially which appeal to the heart, which treat of practical things, and are set forth with earnestness and warmth.

Since it was Calvin's main design, in his system of belief, to exhibit the glory of God, and under the influence of profound devotion, to ascribe everything to his power, while he denied to man, sunk in dust and iniquity, every pretension to honor ; so was he necessarily led to adopt the strongest view of the doctrine of election. God is the source of all things, even of the will to do good, and by him are all things ruled. Hence election consists with divine providence, and then only are we convinced that salvation springs from the undeserved mercy of God, when we have become acquainted with the eternal election, by which God determines some to glory, but denies it to others, without reference to the conduct of either. This election remains a profound mystery, and must not be curiously examined. But it is, notwithstanding, a profitable doctrine, calculated to destroy from the very roots all human pride and assumption. Here occurs the startling statement, that God, for the glory of his righteousness, consigns some to damnation ; and the expression brought against Calvin, "a terror-moving decree ;" *decretum quidem horribile*.\*

\* This celebrated place, *Decretum quidem horribile fateor*, which does hon-



Calvin himself shrunk from the abyss which he contemplated. But so great was his trust in God, and so firm his faith, that he ventured upon that which was most daring, most violent in this doctrine. It cannot be denied that God must plainly discern what will take place among men, and for this reason indeed, that He himself has ordained it. The reprobate are given up to their evil dispositions, that the perfect and incomprehensible righteousness of God may be glorified by their condemnation.

However terrible this system may appear, no less grand is it in the eyes of every one who penetrates it with a feeling of the greatness of God, and with faith. It is fundamentally nothing more than the simple declaration of the fact, that sin and wickedness, the curse and damnation, now exist, we know not wherefore, but as being possible, in the sight of the Holy and Almighty ; even as we can so little understand why God has created anything imperfect, or why especially anything exists,—why God and man exist. The whole is an inexplicable mystery. Hence many of the most worthy Christians of all ages, and even the most obedient in their lives and practice to the divine commands, have from conviction received this doctrine, and acknowledged it as a part of the Gospel.

Calvin felt his real greatness in the treatment of this doctrine ; he felt that he had taken a right position, that he was in his proper atmosphere ; yea, he felt himself so raised up, that he regarded it as necessary for salvation, and believed it to be a peculiar duty to contend for this doctrine with all the means at his command, to make it comprehensible to all, and to implant it in the church. Thus it is that he so often refers to this dogma in his writings,\* that he was so convinced that every one who knew the Scriptures must agree with him, and that he complains that Melancthon did not altogether harmonize with him in this respect, and believed that he concealed his real opinion from fear. “For myself, I openly confess that my conscience will not allow me to yield in this point ; for you seem to write of free-will too philosophically ; and when election is spoken of,

or to his feelings, has also served as the foundation of abuse. Ancillon, *Mélanges Critiques*, p. 37. People accuse Calvin, says that writer, of describing God's decrees as horrible, whereas he simply meant that we ought to tremble at contemplating this mystery ; as he himself expresses it in the French version of the ‘*Institutes*.’ Rivet, t. iii., in his treatise, ‘*Apologeticus*,’ &c., says the same thing.

\* In his Commentaries : Romans ix., Genesis on Pharaoh, Jerem. Lament. iii. 38, Ps. cxli. 3. Also in particular treatises, as in the *De Predestinatione*, that against Pighius, Castalio, Sermons on Job, &c.

you will only accommodate yourself to the common notions of the human understanding."

Lastly, he knew well what were the difficulties connected with this doctrine; but he believed that, as it is found in Scripture, it was not lawful to keep it from the people. In the same letter he calls the doctrine a very complicated one.

After this powerful statement, Calvin shows mankind the abyss of eternal life and eternal death. His profound sense of the greatness and glory of God led him, it is probable, to this contemplation; or we may attribute it to the ardent sincerity with which he loved to exhibit the holy Scriptures, and regarded it as his bounden duty to hide nothing which they contain; or further, to his courage and magnanimity, to his agreement with Augustine, and even to the natural conclusion of his understanding. According to Ammon's remark, all energetic minds incline to this doctrine; while weaker men, as Pelagius, Erasmus, Melancthon, would adopt far milder views. I may observe, on the contrary, that this is not always the case; but that all the reformers and their forerunners, as Huss, Wickliff, and Waldo, received this doctrine; that is, all those Christians who hold most strictly to the Scriptures. The strongest arguments for or against this doctrine cannot be introduced in this place, but must be reserved for the third part, in which we shall describe Calvin's controversy with the Pelagians.

The doctrine of election was so interwoven with every feeling of his heart, he had so guarded it against the host of objections to which it was exposed (lib. iii. c. 21), that we must be silent on this subject. Although, says Calvin, the moderation is praiseworthy which teaches us to approach the secrets of God with great caution, yet we may even here go too far; and hence those who say nothing, effect little good, the rashness of the human mind being with such difficulty suppressed. Let us therefore abide steadfastly by Scripture, that no one may be able to accuse us of depriving believers of that which is said respecting election, or of charging the Holy Spirit with teaching things which ought to be kept concealed. To express it in few words, he means, that the source of election can in nowise be prescience, but the pure will of God, it being impossible that the prescience of God should be passive. He replies to objectors by an appeal to Scripture and St. Augustine.

To the main objection, that it must be unjust to destine the

reprobate to eternal condemnation, without regard to their actions, he replies in the following characteristic manner (lib. iii. c. 23):—"If such thoughts enter the mind of believers, they must surely see how rash and foolish it is to inquire into the ground of God's will, this will being with justice the cause of everything which happens. Then, if any ground exist, something must have gone before, of which we can form no conception. The will of God is so entirely the grand rule of all righteousness, that whatever He wills must be regarded as righteous, because He wills it. If we ask, therefore, why God has done this or that, the answer must be, because He willed it. If we go further, and ask, why did He so will it, then we look for something which is greater and more powerful than the will of God himself, which there cannot be. Let the rashness of man therefore acknowledge that there are limits to speculation : let it not seek after that which does not exist, lest it should lose sight of that which does. This will serve to restrain those who think reverentially of the secret things which belong to God ; and as for the impious who do not fear openly to mock at God, God will himself defend his righteousness against them, and convince them that they cannot escape his judgments."

In the following chapter (24th), Calvin upholds the doctrine of election as independent of merit, and as resulting only from the will of God. This election becomes known through the actual calling, which consists in the preaching of the Word and the illumination of the Holy Spirit. In proof of this we have the testimony of the Bible, the call of Abraham, the witness of the apostle John ; we know that we are his children, through the Spirit which He has given us.

Many fall into error from supposing that the will and the faith of a man are distinct ; as if the will of man were higher than God, and as if his faith depended on himself.

The proof of calling is faith in Christ, but we must never fathom the mystery of our election ! Almost all ask, whence comes our salvation ? From election ! But how is this revealed to us ? Thence often springs despair. This doctrine is as an ocean, upon which we may suffer shipwreck, but upon which we may sail safely, if we avoid curiosity. They plunge themselves into an abyss of misery, who venture upon inquiries of this kind without the Word of God ; while they who view the subject in its proper order, may derive therefrom a large meas-

ure of consolation. We began with our calling, and upon that we stand firm. We look to Christ, on whom rests all the good pleasure of the Father, and in whom alone He can love us. Not in ourselves, not even in God, but in Christ alone do we find the sure proof of our calling, when we feel ourselves in true communion with him.

Again, however, he speaks against the security of the elect, salvation being gained with fear and trembling. Many are called, even the godless, but not with an inward calling. The reprobate hear not the Word of God; or if they hear it, are hardened. God has not predestinated them. He might indeed change their evil will, because He is almighty; but He will not. And why not? This is known only to himself. Nor must we, says Calvin, in the words of Augustine, wish to know more than is necessary.

But that the reprobate do not heed the Word of God which is preached to them, is a sure sign of their wickedness: to this wickedness they have become subject, because God in his righteous but incomprehensible judgment has raised them up to glorify his power by their condemnation.

When the godless hear this, they say that God is playing cruelly with these poor sinners, according to his own irresistible might; but we know that men are guilty of many offences, and suffer only what is just. If we cannot comprehend why this is, we must submit ourselves, and be content to remain ignorant of things where God only allows us to admire the depths of his wisdom, and to adore.\*

Salvation, indeed, is offered to all. It is God's will that all should receive help; but he has predestinated only a few, and these only understand the call. As God deprives man of free-will, there are two wills, say objectors, in God; one which wills the salvation of all men, the other which wills the salvation of only some. Calvin denies this, but observes, that the knowledge of this mystery is reserved for the last day, and considers that if the dispute were fairly and properly conducted, men would at length, like Paul, be silent on the verge of this abyss, and feel the force of his words, "Who art thou that repliest against God!"† This last admission shows, that he was well aware of

\* This chapter shows that Calvin was exposed to much opposition on account of this doctrine, in the exercise of his pastoral duties.

† Romans ix. 20.



the difficulties attending the doctrine, and of the force of the objections by which it was opposed.

This development of the doctrine, the hard places, it may particularly be mentioned, exist in the Strasburg edition. But this chapter is still more carefully labored in the last edition. I have not found the *Decretum horribile* in the first and second revisal, this place having probably been introduced in answer to later objections.

#### FOURTH BOOK.

It is the church which educates the faithful. Salvation exists in the church alone. Separation from the true church, though it be imperfect, is sin. A glimmering of light only remains in the catholic church. The author describes the signs of the true church, and carefully points out how it was gradually lost under the papacy. God's Word is the sole foundation of the power of the church. The authority of councils is greatly limited thereby, and the jurisdiction of the church itself depends on the office of the keys imparted to it by Christ. In addition to these, the principal points referred to are ecclesiastical and temporal punishments, moderation in church property, the honorable rank of the clergy, and vows. The whole doctrine of discipline is found fully treated of in the second edition. As far as it was possible, he put all the opinions here expressed into practice during his residence at Strasburg, but much more completely as soon as he came to Geneva. He was prevented by the force of circumstances from employing them even there in the same manner as they are here represented, but they have exercised a living influence in the discipline of the French reformed church. We shall say no more on this subject in the present chapter, the doctrine of discipline and the relation of the church to the state being especially treated of in the second part of the work. For an excellent account of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper we may refer to lib. iv. c. 17. The following passages will explain his views of infant baptism.

Calvin acknowledges baptism to be a sacrament, but he does not suppose that a child is lost because it is not baptized.\* This

\* Epis 184.—“Cum igitur nullus in te neglectus baptismi deprehendatur, privatio illius infanti nocere non potuit, quum ante excesserit quam tibi commode ad baptismum offerre liceret.”

view confirms the now commonly received opinion, and lessens the necessity of the sacraments.

On the other hand, he insists that baptism ought to be always publicly administered (*in cœtu fidelium*), that the presence of a large number of persons is necessary, and that the rite must be performed by a preacher. He did not allow women to baptize, Christ having committed the duty to his apostles only.

In the 229th letter of the Lausanne edition, there is a very excellent, distinct declaration against the necessity of infant baptism, which is described as only an obsignation, and introduced simply because God said that He would be the God of Abraham and of his children (Gen. xvii. 7):—"In a word, unless we would overthrow every principle of religion, we must admit that salvation does not depend upon the baptism of a child, but that it is merely consigned by baptism. Whence it follows that it is not precisely nor simply necessary. It is rightly remarked, that the thief upon the cross, and many martyrs, went unbaptized into heaven.

"And that all doubt may be the better removed, let this principle be always borne in mind, that baptism does not confer upon infants the power of becoming sons and heirs of God; but that, because they are in that position and degree in relation to God, the grace of adoption is sealed in their flesh by baptism. Otherwise the anabaptists rightly deny them this sacrament."\*

#### SLIGHT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CALVIN AND THE OTHER REFORMERS.

The reformers, Luther and Calvin, agree in their views as to the main doctrines of the Gospel, the Trinity, original sin, election, eternal life, the insufficiency of works, and justification by faith alone. But the feeling of God's unity and omnipotence had not the same influence on Luther's mind as on Calvin's; nor was the theological deduction equally clear in the system of the former, his views not being all derived from a simple fundamental principle.

Both, after the example of Augustine, ascribed conversion to

\* In his second answer to Westphal, he also states his liberal views on the subject of baptism. He asks if the hypocrisy of Simon Magus no longer existed when he had been baptized. The carelessness and stupidity of many who come to the holy table are also instanced to the same purpose. Calvin means that the grace of God can work at an earlier or later period, and is not confined to the moment when baptism is conferred.

the Holy Spirit alone, man being altogether incapable of either beginning, or aiding in, the work of his own conversion. Hence it follows, that conversion and reprobation depend on God alone. But Luther does not insist so strongly as Calvin on this. He therefore left a less profound impression on his church of the doctrine generally. A more popular view of the subject being afterwards adopted, the church expressed itself less strictly against the doctrine of free-will (which, even in the Calvinistic system, is only apparently rejected), and adopted the notion of conditional election.

The reformed theology was founded on the doctrine of justification, and on that of the Lord's Supper, as its two main pillars and supports.

With regard to the former, Calvin has spoken as powerfully as Luther on the imputation of Christ's merits, the real groundwork of the whole reformation. But Calvin represented justification in union with predestination, as resting altogether and exclusively upon it. Luther only insisted that justification is connected with our eternal salvation; and though he strongly supported the doctrine of election, it was not as a fundamental principle with which everything in his system was necessarily connected. Hence Luther could believe that the justified might fall from grace, whereas Calvin considered that grace once received could never be lost. "He who has the Holy Ghost, has Him forever."\* From these principles it follows, according to Calvin, that baptism is not necessary to salvation. The three positions are closely connected with each other, and show in the conclusion drawn from them by the reformer what Bossuet had already so justly remarked. If we be assured that salvation is assigned us by God's decree, then grace and the Holy Spirit can never leave us; and if faith alone justifies, baptism cannot be necessary to the forgiveness of sins, or to the procuring of grace, but is only a sign that all these have been already received.

Little children therefore are endowed with grace, though not baptized, because they are born in the holy covenant. With Luther, on the contrary, baptism was essential, and was connected with exorcism. Even according to Calvin, baptism is very profitable to them, because the sacrament affords indications of grace, which promote the new-birth.

\* Antid. Conc. Trid. in Sess. vi. cap. 13, 14.—"Suam salutem extra periculum esse, quia in manu Dei sit." Instit. l. iii. 2.—"Fidelis non est, nisi qui suæ salutis securitati innixus diabolo et morti confidenter insultet."

The imputation of Adam's offence to his descendants is not distinctly stated in Calvin's system, although the sin of Adam is in the child, which on that account is, in the eyes of God, deserving of punishment, as if it had actually sinned.

Mention has already been made of the second great difference between these reformers, in the observations on the Lord's Supper; and the subject will be further considered in the third part of the work, where attention will be directed to the sacramental controversy. . . . This difference of opinion led afterwards to the dispute on the *Communicatio Idiomatum*. Whilst the Lutherans asserted the ubiquity of Jesus, through the transfusion of the divine properties of his soul into his earthly body, and accused the Calvinists of Nestorianism, or of separating the human and divine attributes in the person of the Redeemer, the Calvinists on the contrary declared the Lutherans guilty of Eutychianism, or of confusing the properties of the two natures, and rejected the doctrine of the ubiquity as untenable and monstrous. This transfusion of the qualities essential to the divine nature of Christ into his human nature, Calvin rejected, during the controversy, in the most determined manner, and insisted, that the glorified Christ, with his body, can be found by the power of faith in heaven only, and in one defined place.

A third difference arose from their views on images, which Calvin altogether rejected, while Luther retained them; and, curious enough also, the false division of the Commandments which bear upon this point, so that by the combination of the first two, the second, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image," may be less conspicuous, or may be passed over altogether, the attention being confined to the first words of the first commandment. But this, though done designedly in the catholic church, was wholly without design in the Lutheran.

Both agree in doctrine respecting the church, but are at variance on the principle of church government. Both admit of excommunication, but Calvin assigns the power of pronouncing it to the consistory alone (composed of laymen as well as ministers), and not to individuals among the clergy, or to the clergy alone.

Melancthon anxiously sought to give a milder character to Luther's doctrine. But he could not satisfy Calvin, whilst he allowed a certain co-operating power to the will. Calvin, who went further in the deductions of the understanding, could not comprehend why Melancthon would not follow him. But the



latter very properly considered that it was far more conducive to salvation not to insist too strongly upon the opposing dogmas.

Of Zwingli, Calvin appears to have thought little as a theologian. He would not have cared, it is probable, to engage in controversy with him, but he esteemed him highly as a man of great worth; alleging with regard to his character as an author, that he had read but little of his writings. This statement would, probably, in his old age have been much less general. Calvin differed more from Zwingli than from the other reformers. Simple and pious as were Zwingli's views in all practical points, his doctrine respecting the divine nature had a metaphysical subtlety, which sometimes bordered on pantheistic notions. This is strongly opposed to the devotional character of Calvin's feelings.\*

But, notwithstanding this, Zwingli developed the doctrine of the Trinity according to Scripture. In his views of human nature, on the contrary, he differed greatly from the profound principles of Calvin and Luther; for while he recognized the corruption of mankind, he did not trace it to the original sin of Adam. He protested however against the free-will of Pelagius. Sin, he acknowledges, is the source of death both to body and soul; but the connection of the universal ruin with the first offence he traces simply to their physical relation (*vitium ac morbus*).

Christ is God and man. The death of Christ is our sin-offering: by this the curse of the law is taken away, and we are made children of God. . . . The law is God's holy will; we are not freed therefrom, but obey it out of love; Christ,—love,—is the end of the law. Righteousness and mercy are intimately united in God, and are the foundation of our pardon. This is strictly orthodox. He also contends against the opposite opinion, that original sin is punishable.†

His views on the universality of the reconciliation effected by Christ are doubtful. He limits it, in many respects, by the doctrine of election. But he agrees with Luther and Calvin in this, that the free divine election does not follow belief, but that belief follows election.

As decided, as much a supralapsarian as Calvin, he asserts

\* As the infinite has this name, because its *essentia et existentia* is infinite, nothing can be conceived as existing beyond it.

† Vergl. Evangel. Kirchenzeitung, 1828, N. 47, p. 381.

that God so formed man that he could not but fall. He represents the divine prescience as absolute, as Calvin did afterwards; but even in stronger terms, when he says: They sinned against the law, not as the authors of sin, but as instrument, which God is free to use according to his will, even as a householder may drink the water or pour it out. And if he employs the instrument for a purpose which works it harm, it disturbs not Him, for He acts with perfect freedom. . . . He therefore moves the murderer to commit murder, &c. God freely elects from among lost mankind those whom He will; He endows them with faith through the operation of the Holy Spirit, through the preaching of the Word, and even without the Word (this is peculiar to him, and contrary to Calvin), as in the case of the heathen.\* The operation of the Holy Spirit is not confined to the preaching of the Word.

It is a sign of election when children of Christian parents die before baptism, or before they have sinned. This nearly corresponds to the Calvinistic doctrine.

He who rejects God gives proof of his reprobation in his wicked life. But man must not set himself up as a judge. There is only one sin which will not be forgiven,—wilful, obstinate unbelief. At the last day, the devil and some portion of mankind will be condemned to eternal fire, for the glory of eternal righteousness. This is in perfect accordance with the doctrine of Calvin. The main difference between them is found in their views of the sacraments.

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The first thing which strikes us in reading the 'Institutes,' is the exceeding clearness and popularity of the style. This endeavor to combine simplicity with scientific exactness, whilst the main end, the good of souls, is never lost sight of, places the work in singular contrast with those written on a similar plan in later times. It is equally useful for the learned and the unlearned Christian. This excellence is closely connected with another. The author was confined to no particular philosophical system. It was not possible, according to the then state of science, that he should preserve himself entirely free from scholasticism, and depend solely upon Scripture; but he never shows himself anxious to subject faith to reason; he is never tempted

\* Thus he placed some of the wise heathen in Paradise, which gave great offence.

to speculate upon evangelical truths from the high ground of philosophy, or to reduce belief to the measure of preconceived opinions. Taking his stand on the Gospel, Calvin could only speak according to his religious experience and the teaching of Scripture. He contended, on the one side, against pantheistic notions, generally in this case having Servetus in view; and, on the other, against materialism, against catholic superstition, worldly infidelity, and the particular views which differed from the rule of sound doctrine.

It will ever remain to Calvin's great honor, that, speculative as he was by nature, he uniformly subjected his powerful understanding to the Word of God, and consecrated his logical acuteness to the service of truth. His work indeed is thus fundamentally, thus essentially useful for the church in all ages, because the sound belief of the author, or his feeling of the oneness and greatness of the living God, lies at the foundation of all he says—of the God revealed in a threefold manner,—the eternal Being, distinct from nature and matter, incomprehensible, creation existing external to himself.

Hence Calvin opposed himself sternly to the speculative notions of his time. The personal God was all to him; he referred everything to this. Man was nothing; whatever of good he possesses, it comes from grace. Deep therefore ought to be the humiliation of human nature and spiritual pride. On this account he considered the doctrine of predestination in its crudest form as of great practical utility, giving as it does all honor to God and none to man. This was a characteristic excellence, strongly opposed to the general temper of the times. The evangelical church, again flourishing, victorious in its complicated warfare, was still weak in respect to its view of the first article of the Creed,—in the belief, that is, of the living God; and the revivers of the church, and all pious men, if they have found the Lord in faith, may derive endless instruction on this subject from Calvin, in whom this vital belief in the true God prevailed over every species of doubt and contradiction. It was not the compulsory belief in one person of the Godhead; not the violent passage of the soul through one door, to a one-sided belief, adopted as the only thing necessary; not God, as revealed in the New Testament only, and whom some mystics represent as comprehended merely by the mind or the feelings; not the God who, united with nature, reveals himself by degrees to our consciences; but the eternal God, whom Moses and the prophets

knew; this was the God whom Calvin proclaimed with overpowering energy; this was the God upon whom his religion was established.

Nor did Calvin fall into the error of the ancient church, which, during its struggles with heresy, so lamentably disfigured the belief in a triune God, that, in the end, a lifeless formulary took its place, as that falsely attributed to Athanasius, and in which the understanding dissects and anatomizes the being of God, so as at last to leave nothing but the empty form. Calvin refused to subscribe this; he, to whom belief in God was life, to whom belief in Christ was life, to whom belief in the Holy Ghost was life. Hence it arises that, though his faith in the triune God forms the very foundation of his work, he has shown no anxiety to give it a particular place in the arrangement of his topics, but has allowed his ideas to take their free and uninterrupted course. To this may be attributed, on the one side, the moderation with which he treats of mysteries, whilst he always, and in all respects, acknowledges the incomprehensible; and, on the other, the practical tendency, the good pious meaning, apparent in his sentiments, and which will always constitute the real blessing of the sincere Christian.

Never, perhaps, since the time of Augustine, has the belief in the true God been so powerfully and so simply set forth. In the scholastic ages, the holiest and the most learned men were held fast bound in the fetters of human reason. Augustine was happily, like Calvin, a devoted worshipper of the living God, and this supported him through life. His spirit and existence were grounded upon this his love to God, whose presence he sighed for, panted after, as for the breath of life. God, as he tells us, in his Confessions, was his light, his joy, and his beauty.

Calvin would not have written a statement of this kind; he was not susceptible of such a feeling of tenderness towards God. Augustine, perhaps, ought to be ranked much higher as a spiritual writer; he exercised, as such, a very marked and extensive influence. But as an acute and logical reasoner, armed with a no less mighty faith, and as an enlightened champion against error and superstition, Calvin is perhaps the greater. Augustine acquired by his long and painful struggles in the course of his conversion, milder dispositions, and readier sympathies with human weakness, than Calvin. The conversion of the latter was earlier and more rapidly accomplished, and he became great rather by a holy energy and intense feeling of duty.



Augustine was originally sensual, but subsequently became inspired with the sublimest sentiment of Christian love. Calvin is simpler and more energetic than Augustine, and keeps his object more constantly in view, even in his style. He had less time to think of the graces of speech.

Augustine and Calvin, two luminous points in the development of theology, stand among all theologians the nearest to each other in one respect, and the most remote from each other when viewed on a different side. The former is the case through their sublime, deeply-felt belief in God, through their experience of the unity in God, and of the revelation of God in Christ. This was their main doctrine: it was mixed up with their inner life, with their doctrine of predestination, election, salvation by grace, original sin, the crucifying of spiritual pride in man. On the other hand, they were most distant from each other in their views of the church. Augustine regarded the visible church as the true church, armed with divine power; and this led to the introduction of that fundamental error of the Roman catholic church, against which Calvin rose as a scourge in the hand of the Lord, mighty through his fearless rejection of all human authority, as well as by his pure understanding of Scripture.

Nor could it be otherwise; for Augustine, who formed an epoch in the development of the internal history of the church, comprehended in himself the germs of both catholicism and protestantism, or of that conflict against errors which were necessarily evolved from principles originally false. He personified the opposition between error and truth.

But nothing is more surprising than the peculiarities in Augustine's and Calvin's views on the subject of election. Like Dante's, Calvin's sublime spirit delighted in fixing its steady gaze on the eternal justice of God, and plunged without fear into the abyss of the righteousness of the Judge, knowing that the Redeemer liveth. Through that daring and inflexible severity, with which he seems to take everything from man, he has mainly excited against himself the hostility of those who are unable to comprehend the workings of his mighty spirit. He wears the livery of the Old Testament, and understands the holiness, righteousness, and omnipotence more clearly than the love of God. It will therefore appear, when we take a nearer view of the subject, why Calvin was so indignant when any one spoke contemptuously of his great doctrine; and when men of sound, ordinary understanding, objected to him the reality of natural

freedom, or the testimony of Scripture, asserting that he made God a sinner. But he had both facts and Scripture on his side. Among the former may surely be reckoned the rejection of the heathen, and that of the Jews to the present day, and the election of Christians. From whatever side we regard the unconversion of the heathen, and the evils which their condition brings with it, their state, and our own undeserved calling, with its attendant blessings, must ever remain an inexplicable mystery,—one in which the love of God cannot, it would seem, be reconciled with his righteousness. The experience of our own hearts affords another fact to the same purpose. Every one knows that he can only become free from sin through divine grace, and that conscience, whether we understand it or not, accuses us of sin without enlightening us as to the origin of the wickedness, which we are unable to escape by our own strength.. All this was a secret to Calvin as well as to every other man, only that he expressed his thoughts with greater freedom and boldness. Hence it was that he could not understand the objection to his doctrine, that it destroyed the freedom of the will. This is really not the case ; on the contrary, it vindicates the most perfect freedom of will, and therefore it is that the most zealous Christians have found, and do still find, in this doctrine, peace and tranquillity. In the first place, it involves a very lively remembrance of the original freedom which was lost. In the second, freedom to do evil remained to every one after the fall, even to the most prostrate heathen. But power to do good, while we still feel it existing in us as bound and captive, is loosed by the might of heavenly grace. Calvin therefore, applying his doctrine to practical purposes, insists more strongly than any other theologian on the necessity of obedience, morality, sacrifices, and resignation. What meaning would there otherwise have been in his whole life, had he not adopted this view of free-will, delivered from bondage through grace ? Grace indeed must first operate on those fast bound in the sleep of sin ; it must inspire them with the desire to call upon God for help ; at least with a longing after God. But as soon as this happens, as it often does while we are unconscious of the change, the work of redemption is carried forward, and the man, supported by his own prayers, or those of others, loosens his will more and more, till he becomes free, as God is free, that is, freely obedient to the law. We have a high feeling of our freedom, and, as we ought, rest confidently in it. This doctrine therefore seems to many foolish.

But whence the feeling of freedom? First, we feel free to do evil, freedom in this respect having never been taken from us. Secondly, because being born under the common influence of Christendom, we have grown up, enjoying from our childhood an unfettered will, a will made free by grace; for grace acts upon us from the first day of our life, bears us forward and works in us, without our knowing it. Hence the lust and freedom of the wicked; hence the freedom of the good. The latter among the heathen is far weaker than among Christians.

But in what does the fault of this system consist? In its incompleteness. Calvin, and before him his great master Augustine, employed all their talent, zealous as they were for the good of the church, to root up the wretched notions of the Pelagians, and to prove the original, lost freedom and captive state of man; whereas they ought to have devoted their admirable abilities to show, that although God leads him by grace, as the mother does her child by the hand, and although election and conversion are the fruits of grace, man is yet free, and with recovered freedom becomes morally answerable to his conscience and to God.

Before the fall man had free-will (*liberum arbitrium*): after the fall, he had freedom in respect to sin. The *nodus* of the whole question is this: man is free, feels that he is, but cannot grasp his freedom. Freedom supposes a capability of choice; the power of taking the good or evil part, and arbitrarily determining our course. But this freedom is not consistent with the nature of a moral being; evil is altogether opposite to such a nature. The freedom therefore to choose evil always pre-supposes a kind of corruption already existing in the being. The true freedom of a moral being consists in this, that he is free to conform himself to the law of holiness. Freedom, under this form, is in both relations a contradiction, and yet are both equally necessary.

Nothing therefore remains but to acknowledge, in opposition to the mere natural understanding, the existence of free-will, though to us incomprehensible. If Calvin had been more careful in this respect, he would have guarded his system especially against every appearance of fatalism, and have exhibited clearly and distinctly the opposite system, with the nature of which he was so well acquainted. The doctrine would then have been less dangerous to the people, and he would not have felt it so necessary to warn the weak against employing their thoughts upon the subject. Both sides of the truth are firmly supported

in his system, the one and the other as antagonist principles. This is but ill understood, till a closer observation shows the middle point; with Calvin it was the religious feeling, which asserts, in the first place, the divine election, honor and power belonging to God alone; and in the next, the moral law, duty, the will of God, and the free aspirations of man after holiness.

Calvin however did not sufficiently consider that the understanding is incapable of reconciling these adverse propositions. By giving too prominent a place to his particular dogma, he has in this instance lessened the evangelical character of his system. The Gospel is itself adapted to the poor and simple, but instead of supporting this doctrine on the foundation of faith, he has weighed it down with thought and argument, contrary to the example of Christ himself (Luke xiii. 23, 24). Thus he overthrows what he constructed with so much labor, and introduces apparently a species of mechanical compulsion and necessity, the idea of which fills the soul with anxiety and deprives it of the power of action. We have said *apparently*, for in many parts of his work he contends against the error which his reasoning seemingly justifies, with great force and clearness.

But in the eyes of weak men, who cannot survey all the parts of his system with his own eagle-like glance, who cannot rise above speculation, who do not bring the same faith as he brought to the inquiry,—in the eyes of such men, God, love, righteousness, and the moral nature of man all disappear, because we are not all Calvins. I am assuredly not intending here to oppose the doctrine of election, which is in so manifold a way declared in holy Scripture. My censure applies only to the free, the too self-satisfied manner in which Calvin, contrary to his usual moderation, sets forth this mystery,—a mystery which, like some others, lies beyond the circle of human inquiry, and from approaching too near to which man should shrink, as standing on the edge of a fathomless abyss. Still, Calvin only half unveils the mystery; but when we have gone a step further, we become perfectly satisfied with the stern and difficult view. Man however, as Bengel has somewhere said, must not look at God behind the scenes. Thought may lead men to the brink of blasphemy, when they venture to follow its glimmerings too far; and the Christian does well, in respect to this article of his belief, where arguments for and against can be brought, to keep silence and confess his ignorance.

But if, through the too violent and unmodified representation



of election, Calvin's noble work is marked with human imperfection, yet was his faith, as a principle, not to be surpassed; it was a faith so strong and energetic that it impelled him to fanaticism in his treatment of opponents. It would be good for us, in times like these, to inhale the breath of such a vigorous faith. He boldly waged war with the low principles of the church, and, were it only on that account, deserves consideration. In the present day men have set God aside by their speculations, and, placed man in his stead, as absolutely necessary to the eternal universe, and not as created by grace. All means have been tried to construct systems of belief; at one time they have been derived from religious feeling, at another from some favorite idea, and at other times from a sensation of dependence on an unknown, infinite something, which is called God.

When a man sets out on his inquiry with a devout sense of the personal God, who reveals himself to the spirit; when he starts with a well-grounded principle, and takes the Bible for his guide, the fallen creature, with the law of God in his heart, feels the necessity of a Redeemer; hence there is something definite and distinct in his inquiries, and seeking salvation he feels himself on the path of truth. But when the pious sentiment is a mere dependence on some unknown being, or an expression of the desire, or of the need, which man feels of reconciliation with the unknown God; or when philosophy constructs and fashions the being of God, places together the eternal substance and the spirit, and the necessary incarnation of God is received as a principle of religion; and when repeated efforts are made to form a perfect elementary treatise, a popular catechism,—all this proves too well that no dogmatic writer has as yet found the right spirit in which such a blessed and comforting system of doctrine ought to be exhibited.

This evidently proves that evangelical truth has not yet become thoroughly established among us, that a partial effort only is made to reach it, while that, as one after another seizes this or that portion of the whole, he exclaims in a tone of triumph that he has found the truth itself. Thus one has the Son and the Father, another the three divine persons, a third acknowledges Christ and the principle of evil, a fourth Christ alone; none confess the holy Trinity, which lies at the foundation of the truth, that is, God himself; and we cannot but feel how high the power of faith raised Calvin above all this.

From the standing-place afforded by Calvin and Christianity,

must the tendency of the present age be condemned as atheistic, and convicted of the sin of setting the human spirit in the place of God. The understanding, or the spirit of man, occupies the loftiest rank; it brings forth God in its course, and in the acknowledgment that all religion is necessarily grounded on the incarnation of God lies concealed the pride of man, it being hence supposed that God must become man in order to perfect his being.

But although we are now mainly concerned with the doctrine of the Trinity, as the root of Christianity, and with the fact that Christianity is neither polytheistic nor monotheistic, but that as *absolute religion* it combines in itself the subject and the substance; yet it is very evident, as we look with astonishment at the boldness with which man obscures, by his own gross notions, the radiance of the true ideal, that he has only to do with a very high species of unbelief, which, however, destroys the life through the form. But if, lastly, on the other side, a rash anti-christianity and the spiritless half-faith of the cold understanding are added hereto, and the still greater number of those who, in Christian countries, live and die as heathens; among whom the better class at least exhibit a higher poetical and more imaginative feeling, but know nothing of regeneration; if this be the case, every Christian must be charmed with Calvin's zeal for the honor of the Lord and his house. His spirit must glow with indignation, that, in the time when so mighty a struggle is at hand,—that when the fulness of the heathen is ready to come in, such a heavy slumber should be upon us; and he will pray to the Lord that he may re-establish the old doctrine in our hearts, and bestow another teacher on the world, who, although exhibiting imperfections like the reformers generally, yet, knowing in whom he believes, may oppose himself boldly to the wickedness which constitutes the main character of our times,—a teacher, who, not with his own strength, or in his own darkness, but as the shepherd of Bethlehem, may strive, in the name of the living God, against the mail-covered infidelity of the age, which raises its gigantic head shining with borrowed light; one who seeking his pebble in the brook of life, may hurl it against this cold, disdainful boaster, and pierce him to the brain, because he has despised the testimony of the living God. And now it becomes us to speak with the freedom and confidence of Luther, "They must and shall let the Word stand, and no thanks to them for it."

## CHAPTER XV.

PUBLICATION OF CALVIN'S COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.—EXEGETICAL TALENT OF CALVIN.

EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS, 1539.

As Calvin's 'Commentaries' are now in the hands of every one, a very brief notice on the subject will serve our present purpose. Tholuck's remarks on his exegetical talent may be referred to as valuable in this respect.\*

In the preface to the Commentary on the Romans, Calvin gives us his own ideas on the duty of a commentator, or assists us at least to understand his views. He dedicated the work, after having publicly expounded the Epistle at Strasburg, to his friend and instructor Grynæus, then at Basel. It was from a feeling of gratitude that he did this, as he expresses himself in the following extract:—"I remember that when we had a friendly conversation together, three years ago, on the best manner of interpreting Scripture, that which you preferred seemed also the most useful to me. We both considered that the most excellent quality in an expositor is clearness combined with brevity, it being his particular duty to exhibit the spirit of the writer; whence he errs from his proper line in proportion as he turns the attention of the reader from the writer on which he is employed. We therefore wished that some one might arise among those who devote themselves to this branch of theology, who would undertake to facilitate the study of Scripture, without carrying the student through too great a mass of commentaries. How far I have succeeded in this attempt, I leave you and my readers to judge. Many writers, both in ancient and modern times, have been engaged on this Epistle. Their labors

\* Senebier and Ziegenbein refer his first work to the year 1540, but the preface has 1539. Oporinus, in a letter from Basel, 1537 (MSS. Goth.), after expressing the want of a new edition of his Catechism, says, "I hear that you are lecturing with great praise and utility on the epistles of St. Paul. I do pray you not to consider it too burdensome to let us also enjoy the advantage of what you say in those lectures." Calvin therefore had already at Geneva, as professor, lectured on the Epistles of St. Paul, and was repeating his lectures at Strasburg.

have been well employed; for he who understands this portion of Scripture, has opened to himself a door by which he may proceed to the comprehension of the whole of the divine Word. Among the later expositors, Melancthon is distinguished for learning, ingenuity and skill,—qualities which he has exhibited in all the various departments of literature. Hence he has thrown much more light on Scripture than those who preceded him. His object however appears to have been to examine only the more remarkable difficulties of Scripture. He therefore designedly passes over many things which may perplex an ordinary mind. Bullinger followed, and earned much praise, uniting as he did, with learning, great readiness and ability. At length Bucer has given us the results of his studies, and set the crown to all. Bucer, as is well known to you, is surpassed by none of his contemporaries in depth or variety of learning, in clearness of intellect, in extent of reading, or other excellencies; but he deserves the still more eminent praise, that he has devoted himself with greater diligence than any one of our times to the exposition of Scripture. To measure myself with these men would be a rivalry that has never entered my thoughts; let them continue to enjoy the honor and respect accorded them by the judgment of all good men. But still it will be granted me, I trust, that no human work can ever be so perfect in its structure as to leave nothing for the diligence of those who come after to accomplish. All that I venture to say for myself is, that I do not regard the present work, which I have been led to undertake with no other thought than that of promoting the good of the church, as altogether useless. Philip (Melancthon) has expounded only such chapters as he found necessary to his object. Bucer is too lengthy to be read by men who have many other things to engage them, and too profound to be understood by humble and not very attentive minds."

Calvin intended his work to occupy a middle place between the two writers to whom he thus alludes.\* Some few characteristic observations are introduced respecting the sacred nature of exposition, and the liberty exercised by a commentator disregarding of tradition.

Calvin's opinion of some other expositors is found in a letter,

\* How greatly he loved brevity and clearness, he states in his preface to the minor prophets. "If God has given me any ability to expound Scripture, I know well with what fidelity and diligence I endeavor to avoid all mere subtleties," &c.



in his own hand-writing, dated May 19, 1540.\* To Viret's inquiry, he answers: "Capito lectures on Isaiah, and might be useful to you in illustrating the prophets; but he dictates nothing to his hearers. Zwingli is not wanting in skill; but he takes too much freedom, and thus often wanders from the real meaning of the prophets. Luther is not very careful to examine the exact sense of words, or the circumstances of the history (that is, he is not a grammatical-historical commentator), but is satisfied if he can derive from the text some useful lesson. No one as yet has employed himself carefully about this work, with the exception of *Æcolampadius*, who is himself not always on the right path. Although you are without the necessary helps to such a labor, yet I trust the Lord will not forsake you."

The Epistle to the Romans has been an especial object of attention among protestant commentators. It embraces the peculiar and fundamental principles of Christian doctrine, and stands directly opposed to the Catholic and Pelagian errors which so long prevailed. Hence Melancthon adopted it as the basis of his *Loci Communes*, and Calvin as that of his 'Institutes.' Melancthon's labors extended from the year 1522 to 1532. His object being dogmatic rather than exegetical, his annotations are chiefly confined to dogmatic passages. Calvin's remark consequently was just. The latter prized the Epistle to the Romans above all the rest, because it so entirely harmonized with his argument, and with his sublime view of God's grandeur, of his all-comprehending power, and the nothingness of man, who lives only by the grace of God, and owes his freedom wholly to its support. "Works cannot make you righteous, but the grace of God through Jesus, who is your righteousness and your life."

The old expositors among the reformers very properly felt and understood, that the great end of the Apostle was not to compose a mere argument against Jewish doctrine and prejudices. But Calvin saw still further, that Paul intended to exhibit the whole system of Christian doctrine in its height and depth, setting no limit to his meditations on the sublime mystery. And since no writer, either among the fathers or among the reformers, has taken so large and complete a view of this Epistle, or treated it so thoroughly according to the fundamental principles of the Gospel, as Calvin, so it may be confidently added, that his is the best commentary that has appeared up to the present day, when the evangelical church is again entering upon the path

\* Mnss. Gen.

which he opened. Tholuck's opinion of the work is thus expressed: "It combines the Romish style, the fundamental grammatical-historic mode of interpretation, with profound thought and a living Christianity."

As the most useful part of Luther's labors consisted in his translation of the Scriptures, so Calvin deserves the highest praise for his able exposition of the divine Word. With the exception of the books of Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Esther, Nehemiah, Ezra, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, and the Revelation of St. John, he expounded the whole Bible. The selection which he made plainly shows that Calvin's mind naturally led him to employ himself not on the outward or historical portions of Scripture, but rather on those which contain the root and kernel of faith. It was only in his old age that he began to expound the historical books. The commentary on Joshua was his last labor. Scaliger praises him for not having expounded the Apocalypse: "It was wise of him not to write on this book;" and continues, "O how well did Calvin comprehend the mind of the prophets! No one ever understood it better! Calvin wrote best of all on Daniel, but derived the whole of his materials from St. Jerome. O how admirable a book is the Institutes! Calvin and Beza, both natives of Poitiers, were originally devoted to the study of the law. . . . Calvin did well in not writing on the Apocalypse."

And Bayle quotes from Bodin: "In interpreting the divine oracles, I have ever preferred adopting the conclusion which pronounces the meaning of a difficult passage not clear, to rashly coinciding with the opinion of others on matters but ill understood; and greatly do I admire the elegant, no less than prudent, discourse of Calvin, who, being asked his opinion of the Apocalypse, ingenuously replied, that he was altogether unable to comprehend the meaning of the very obscure writer of that book, and that it was a question among learned men to whom the authorship should be ascribed."

This is very characteristic of Calvin, whose clear, acute understanding could not satisfactorily employ itself on this book. It seemed to require a prophetic power to interpret its mysterious language, and of this Calvin would know nothing. His contemporaries were well acquainted with his exegetical talent; and his friends, especially Bucer, entreated him to devote his abilities altogether to the work of exposition, so useful and important to the church. Bayle says of him: "He was a man on whom God

had conferred great talents, a powerful mind, an exquisite judgment, a retentive memory, a solid and eloquent style, unwearied application, vast knowledge, and great zeal for the truth." All these qualities are peculiarly fitted to make a good commentator.

It has been generally remarked, that the reformed church has proved itself much superior to the Lutheran in respect to commentators; for this praise it is indebted to Calvin. The Lutheran church was especially called upon to establish its system of doctrine by an appeal to Scripture. Thus Luther, Melancthon, Musculus, Chytræus, Brentius, Buggenhagen, &c. were employed in this labor; while Calvin, Beza, Zwingli and Bucer directed their chief attention to unfold the particular meaning of the Scriptures. So also, at a later period, the reformed church produced distinguished commentators, as Grotius, Episcopus, Clericus.

But Calvin is also further distinguished from Zwingli, who translated and expounded Isaiah and Jeremiah, the Gospels, Epistles, &c.; and from Œcolampadius, who expounded, among other portions of Scripture, Isaiah and the Epistle to the Romans,—by his good taste and acuteness, if not also by his more perfect knowledge of the original languages. He is less anxious to discover types and allegorical meanings. In his desire to exhibit the literal meaning of Scripture, he often sacrifices earlier proofs and illustrations, and from the conviction that the truth must finally prevail. Thus he frequently sees only David in some of the Psalms, in which he before supposed he had found Christ; and therefore it was that Leon blamed him so much, because he selected but few of his proofs of the Trinity from the Old Testament,—but few types and prophecies. Hutter even pretended that he wished to favor Judaism against Christianity (Calvinus Judaizans).

When R. Simon unjustly objects to him that he knew nothing of Hebrew but the letters, and very little of Greek, this statement, so often angrily adduced by the catholics, falls back upon the accuser. In the Old Testament, the Psalms, the Commentaries on the books of Moses and Daniel are eminently characteristic of his ability,—the Psalms more than all; for he could sympathize, as he says in the preface, with the feelings they express. He knew, like David, what it was to suffer, and to lead a life of peril and agitation.

Among his commentaries on the books of the New Testament, the most deserving of mention are those on the Epistles

of St. Paul. As a thinker, he could not but feel himself in harmony with the deeply meditative and argumentative Apostle. His Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles deserves also particular mention; Calvin's practical religious feeling is here continually apparent. As in Luther's translation of the New Testament, there breathes the indescribable breath of life, which no learning or art ever reached in other times; so there is also in Calvin's Commentaries a life and power not to be found in the most learned of modern expositions.

Tholuck has conferred the greatest benefit on the theological world by bringing these almost forgotten Commentaries on the New Testament again into notice. Those on the Old will probably follow; and we extract the following from Tholuck's classical observations on Calvin's exegetical talent.

"Calvin was not only skilful and happy in his exposition of the grammatical sense, in his correct remarks on particular expressions, and in his characteristic views, but also in his inquiries carried beyond the grammatical into the historical, poetical, and prophetic sense of important passages. All this shows how he penetrated the meaning of the several writers, according to his power of dogmatic reasoning.

"In his Commentary on the New Testament, we cannot but admire his simple, elegant style, his dogmatic freedom, the tact with which he treats his subject, his multifarious learning and profound Christian piety. Corresponding to the form is the elegance of the diction; a neatness and propriety of expression, especially apparent in the prefaces. But this elegance is not discovered in an affected selection of words (*delectus verborum*), Calvin's style being very different to the unnatural puritanism of a Bembo or a Castalio, who sacrificed the peculiar expressions of Christianity for those of heathenism. So far is this from being the case, that one may always discover heart and feeling in what Calvin wrote; and there are few church writers indeed who could so skilfully combine with Roman latinity such an expression of Christian warmth, or so much pathos with such unaffected gravity.

"Another excellence in Calvin is his care not to fall into digressions. The Lutheran commentators were engaged rather in explaining particular heads of doctrine (*loci communes*) than in writing connected commentaries. Thus we often miss, in Melancthon for example, the explanation of difficult passages, immediately before us, while he dilates at great length on others



which afford him the opportunity of dogmatic expositions. Calvin himself even was not altogether free from the habit of his time, and often breaks out into violent declamation against the pope and the monks; but he does this much less frequently than his contemporaries, and such a species of polemics in times like his was not to be condemned.

"The dogmatic freedom of an expositor consists in this, that, with all respect for the orthodox views of the church, he yet does not feel himself constrained to give an exposition which is wanting in harmony, or which seems to contradict the ordinary laws of language. Tradition may guide, but it cannot bind. If the Socinian and modern neologist have fallen into important errors through their neglect of exegetical tradition, so, on the other side, were the Lutheran commentators of the seventeenth century in the greatest danger of again making tradition, as the Roman church before had done, the principle of exposition. Calvin preserved the right mean between the two extremes: he speaks well on this subject in one of his prefaces.

"Calvin was far from following the error of Luther, who, neglecting the basis of historical testimony, supplied its place by mere subjective opinion, and hence brought the genuineness of Scripture itself into dispute. As little disposed was he to sympathize with those who anxiously defended the apostolic origin of writings to which the testimony of history is clearly opposed. He guards himself however with the greatest moderation, where the larger number of historical authorities is on the other side, against a rash opposition. Thus he says in his argument to the Second Epistle of Peter, 'Even though in all parts of the Epistle the majesty of the spirit of Christ may be clearly seen, I regard it as a matter of religion utterly to reject every phrase which cannot be recognized as the genuine expression of Peter.' On the Epistle of the Hebrews, he says, 'I must not be quoted as among those who consider Paul the author of this Epistle.' He adds his reasons with critical and philosophical acuteness.

"Calvin exhibits less fondness than Erasmus or Beza for critical inquiries. Verbal criticism requires precision. He passes over without any notice the less important variations. That which most interests him is the dogmatic portion of exposition, but he had no desire to heap together a vast mass of orthodox evidence. Thus, on John x. 30, he says: 'The ancient writers gave a wrong interpretation of this passage from a desire to

prove that Christ is *ὁμοούσιον* with the Father; whereas our Lord is disputing, not concerning the unity of substance, but on his agreement with the Father.'"

He possesses a very happy tact in expounding, and hence no forced explanation is to be found in his commentaries. He will not place John on the same historical line with the three other Evangelists; and there is no commentary from his pen on the Apocalypse.

Calvin's learning enters less into his expositions than is the case with Beza; he is never thoroughly interested in the work of criticism, pays no especial regard to codices, makes few allusions, except in a general way, to the old Greek commentators,—only occasionally expressing an opinion on Erasmus, Origen, Chrysostom,—and never indulging himself, like Beza, in formal, hostile criticism on their expositions, or on the translation of Erasmus or the Vulgate. Nor does he add nice inquiries into forms of speech. He was not wanting in the means for this, but he desires to adapt his work as much as possible to the necessities of the public at large.

Against those, the mystics, who despised learning, he says, in his note to one Cor. viii. 1, "Knowledge is no more to be found fault with because in some instances it puffeth up, than is a sword, if it fall into the hand of a madman. This is said in reference to those fanatics who furiously clamor against all art and all science, as if they only availed to puff men up, and were not most useful instruments both of piety and common life."

Semmler asserts that Calvin was mainly indebted to Pellicanus, but he seems to have been dependent neither on him nor on Zwingli.

A Christian, in whom the inward life is so active, and who daily endeavors to walk in the way of the Lord Jesus, must necessarily read the Scriptures with an enlightened eye, and be able to comprehend and explain their deep, religious meaning. In this respect Calvin and the other reformers are on a line with each other, except, in some measure, Beza and Camerarius, whose religious element is less apparent in their commentaries. But there is a decided difference between comprehending, with profound Christian intelligence, the principles and particular doctrines of the New Testament, according to their inner meaning, and possessing the power of interpreting the holy Scriptures in their mutual connection, by the help of a psychology resting

on Christian experience. It was in the latter respect that Calvin was so superior to the other venerated commentators of his age. The unity of the spirit, which bound all the reformers together in spiritual love, happily exhibited itself on the part of Calvin in the exposition of the most characteristic principles of the Gospel. In the Epistles of St. Paul he penetrates deeply into the spirit of the Apostle, and, as it may be so easily perceived, becoming one with it, he explains what is particular from what is general; and in this respect he resembles Chrysostom, except that the latter allowed rhetoric to exercise a prejudicial influence on his style. The whole New Testament history becomes vital under Calvin's hand; he lives in every active, speaking, individual character, in the wicked as in the good; and he expounds every discourse from the relations and from the very souls of the speakers. In the Acts of the Apostles especially this his art and skill are exhibited in the most wonderful manner. He seizes with admirable force the peculiar characteristics of the actors mentioned in the history, and presents them to the reader. In the same skilful manner he expounds the discourses of St. Paul, and converts them without violence into a regular and connected sermon.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE SCRIPTURES TRANSLATED INTO FRENCH.

IN 1540 there appeared at Geneva, in Calvin's name, but during his absence, a translation of the whole Bible, with the title, "The Bible; in which are contained all the canonical books both of the Old and New Testaments, translated into French, by John Calvin."

This was the mightiest weapon which the spirit of truth employed against the spirit which, in the same year, established the order of Jesuits; a spirit which, not immediately indeed (for Loyola, with a nobler species of enthusiasm, sought to create a spiritual chivalry for his church), but yet soon connected itself with worldly prudence. This instructed its votaries to become, or to seem, all things to all men,—pious to the good, vain to the wicked. But the effort was powerless against the truth, which then beginning with the Bible, penetrated alike the palace and

the hovel. Let any one compare the work of Calvin and Luther with that of Loyola, who was born within ten years of the latter, as a sign that struggles and conflicts will always exist upon the earth, and let them see on which side the victory is. The Society of Jesus appeared on the horizon like a comet, threatening ruin to mankind, and striving to involve in darkness the fair, double star of truth. But the holy Scriptures, which both explained according to their peculiar views, gained the victory over that institution. Falling inward upon itself, oppressed by its own chief, and dispersed, it has been revived in later times only to prove how utterly weak is this spirit of the world.

If we compare the two reformers together, we are bound to give Calvin the first rank in what concerns the more learned exposition of Scripture, but to assign it to Luther when we take into account his popular translation. The version above alluded to did not proceed altogether from the spirit of Calvin. It was only an edition, revised by him, of that of Olivetan, who had before him the translation made by Le Fevre d'Etaples, published at Antwerp, 1530.

Robert Olivetan, a relation of Calvin, from Noyon, whose death he laments in one of his writings (1539), and Calvin himself, undertook, at an early period, to correct le Fevre's translation by a comparison with the original text. They had not sufficient money at that time to venture upon the publication of a new edition. But when Farel visited the Waldenses, in the valley of Angrogna, he found there only written copies of the Scriptures, and those of a remote date. The people experienced the greatest want of printed Bibles. So urgent was their feeling on this subject, that they offered to collect the money necessary to accomplish the desired object. They freely gave of their property all that they had, and Farel received through the brothers Adam and Olivetan, whom he sent into the valleys after his return, a commission to superintend the printing of a Bible for their use. Fifteen hundred dollars in gold were forwarded by these poor devoted people to meet the expenses of the work,—an immense sum for those times and for such a people.

Beza, in his church history, describing the mission of the Waldenses, relates that, "in the year 1535, they printed at their expense, at Neuchatel, the first French Bible of those times, translated from the Hebrew by P. R. Olivetan, assisted by John Calvin, who subsequently frequently corrected it in particular passages. For with regard to the French translations of the



Bible formerly printed, and during the darkness of ignorance, they exhibited nothing but errors and barbarisms."

The French had not the happiness, like the Germans, to possess already several versions of the Scriptures. Earlier experiments had been lost during the persecutions. It is well known that Waldo translated the Bible into the vulgar tongue.

At Geneva, help was obtained from the manuscript copies of the Bible translated by Guiars of Moulins. P. R. Olivetan improved Faber's translation, which was only, it is supposed, a translation of the Old Testament from the Vulgate, according to Pagninus, and that by Erasmus of the New. This translation was published under Calvin's name, in 1540, and at Lyons in 1541, 1545. After the death of Olivetan, Calvin revised the whole work. It again appeared at Geneva in 1551, and was reprinted by R. Stephanus in 1553. This last edition must be considered as the authorized Bible of the reformed church. In 1557, 1580, 1637, 1669 it was republished by Desmarets; in 1707 by Martin, in 1724 by Osterwald, in 1805 by the clergy of Geneva, in very elegant style, but not literally. The New Testament, translated by Beausobre and Lenfant, appeared in 1728. This work exhibits great diligence, but little life or freshness. It came not gushing from the heart, it bore no impress of the soul; it was the production of learning, not of the spirit.

The translation by Castalio (published at Basel, 1555), Calvin's opponent, was less fortunate than that of Olivetan. Castalio, though so celebrated for his knowledge of the ancient languages, was but little skilled in writing his own; his style wanted dignity and grace.

The German reformed church would not recognize the great excellence of the Lutheran translation. Another German translation therefore was made by Jos. Piscator, in 1602, at Herborn, but it met with no success. Like Tremellius, he was too anxious to be literal.

When we consider these various experiments, and see how others continue to be made in France, but with little advantage, we cannot but regret that Calvin did not put his hand heartily to the work, and by the exercise of his originality and authority enrich the French church and language with a translation inspired by the breath of God. He was the only man fitted to undertake this work, for it was not mere learning which such a practical and popular design required, but a deep Christian life, an inward comprehensive thought, recognizing the fulness of

grace and the misery of man,—a sentiment only really felt in those times of anxiety when the heart cries to God for help, and finds in the struggle the right expression of its emotions. I should therefore prefer to all the modern translations the first old French version, freed from its particular blemishes, which, with the Lutheran, notwithstanding all its errors, will continue to be the most useful for Christians, till at some future period of struggle, difficulty and inspiration, a translator shall appear, superior to the world, with all its erudition, its fine, precise and heartless speculations. The most learned men in these quiet times can scarcely translate a psalm so as to render it edifying to the ears of the common people, nor the poets address a song to the honor of God fitted to exalt the soul. Their thoughts cannot discover the wonderful land where resounds the eternal hallelujah. There are learned orations enough, but who ever hears a melody in these days which stirs the conscience? But when a spirit-gifted man, superior to his times in thought and feeling, to whom the people are indebted for all they enjoy, and whom future ages will honor, comes forth with such a work, that work will remain as a sacred thing, whatever the storms or the changes which take place around it. It can never be reduced to a likeness with the perverted, artificial creature of fashion, or lose itself in the watery, common-place insignificance of the times. He alone who can produce works of this kind influences the language and the imagination of his countrymen, instead of being governed by them. His work is like the family-book of prayer for the whole people, the book which shall preserve the old simple speech of early days for coming generations, and defy the influence of innovation.

It has been rightly said of Luther, “that a German translation of the Bible was a labor which only an extraordinary man could have accomplished at such a period, or have performed in a manner so surpassing the expectation of all his contemporaries. Even posterity still contemplates with admiration the spirit of the translator in Luther’s work,—the force of the language, its dignity and grace, the correct taste, the fine feeling, the harmony of the style with the subject, from the simplest narrative to the sublimest and most spiritual psalm; while the ease and rhythm are preserved, which both please the ear and favor devotion.”

This admiration is increased when we consider that Luther was obliged to create a language for himself. He is the Dante

of the high-German speech. Like that great man, he gathered from all the idioms of the language the most significant and the most sonorous, and then blended them, according to strict analogy, with the popular idiom of his own countrymen. Luther's language is still the foundation of our classical, literary language, and this is enough to prove how entirely his experiment succeeded.

Calvin, who has also exercised an acknowledged influence on the French language, might have easily modified its whole structure according to his spirit, and have created it, as it were, anew. Though not in the same way as the Academy and theatre at Paris, yet like Luther in Germany, he would have become an authority, had he fixed the lordly simplicity of the old French language, preserved to the times of Louis XIV., when the reformers were so numerous in France, in a beautiful and popular translation of the Bible. It is even now the grand but the fruitless aim of the so-called romantic school to imitate this early excellence of the language ; to oppose its naïveté to the modern affectation of classical precision ; an excellence which so charms us in Montaigne, and many other early writers, who exhibit a freedom and idiomatic variety which the excessive refinement of later times, we know not why, has altogether suppressed. What might we not have looked for from this language, if, susceptible as it is of the highest improvement, as the daughter of the ancient languages, it had preserved with its tact and its logical exactness, that genial depth and simplicity which we so admire in the old French poets ? Our own age is emulous of the genius, the simplicity of heart and freshness of former times, and it is making a vain effort to inoculate itself by artificial means with those main characteristics of an earlier literature.

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## CHAPTER XVII.

CALVIN AT THE DIET OF WORMS AND RATISBONE.—HE  
BECOMES THE FRIEND OF MELANCTHON.

IN the year 1539-40, the emperor commanded the protestant and catholic divines to assemble at Worms, and afterwards at

Ratisbone, in order, under the presidency of Granvella, to concert measures for restoring concord. We give the history of this affair.

The protestants desired the emperor to allow this conference to be held as determined at Frankfort ; but it was considered by the pope as an interference with his rights, as the supreme judge in controversies, that any one but himself should enter into such inquiries, or pretend to decide upon the subjects in question. He therefore did all in his power to hinder the proceedings. Charles, whose greater interest it was to secure the good-will of the Germans, rather than the approbation of the pope, paid no attention to the warnings of his holiness. Preparations were made for the conference at Hagenau, and the business of the meeting was begun at Worms. Melancthon represented the one side, and Eckius the other. They had already proceeded far in their labors, without coming to a conclusion, when the emperor gave orders for the conference to be broken up, that it might be recommenced with greater solemnity in Ratisbone, at the assembling of the diet in that city the following year. This was done, and the meeting took place with great pomp and ceremony. Every one expected a violent struggle and some final decision. Both parties agreed to leave to the emperor the choice of those who were to conduct the debate, and, instead of indulging in open strife, it was hoped that the different divines might inquire, in a friendly manner, into the nature of the disputed points. This diet is also further remarkable from the circumstance, that the Venetian, Gaspar Contarini, who had been raised to the dignity of cardinal by Paul III., and who, as a noble catholic, was celebrated for his mildness of character and his inward convictions of the necessity of reform, enjoyed on this occasion the largest share of influence. The two parties seemed on the point of reconciliation, and the history of the world, had such been the case, would have taken a different direction. It is well known that the protestants did not willingly separate from the great unity, and the pope seemed now ready to yield in many respects to their demands. Political relations favored this placable disposition ; the emperor wished to see concord established ; Melancthon and Bucer were inclined to peace, and Contarini freely offered them his hand. He agreed with the reformers in adopting the idea of justification as his starting-point, and allowed that it proceeds from



faith, without any merit of our own, insisting only that this faith must be an active faith.

Hopes were entertained that the period of reconciliation was not far distant. It was necessary however that the pope and Luther should give their consent; and of these, the one thought that there was not truth enough, the other that there was too much. That Calvin's penetrating judgment did not allow him, even from the beginning, to indulge in the expectations of the public, is plainly indicated in his correspondence. Dissatisfied with the yielding temper of Bucer and Melancthon, it is not improbable that he exercised some degree of influence on the feelings of those concerned. His opinion was highly esteemed, and, like Luther, he firmly opposed every attempt to effect a union which might in the least endanger truth. He had no wish to take any part in the business of the diet; its uselessness was evident to him from the first; he had no trust in Contarini.\* On the side of the catholics the emperor nominated Eckius, Gropper and Pflug; on that of the protestants, Melancthon, Bucer, Pistorius. These were all distinguished men, and, with the exception of Eckius, in favor of peace. Calvin gives his opinion of them in a letter to Farel:†—"It is above all things necessary for us to prove the dispositions of those employed in this business. Julius Pflug is an eloquent man, and of cultivated mind, but a very weak theologian; and, though irreproachable in his life, is ambitious and a courtier. As he therefore neither possesses the requisite knowledge, nor is sufficiently firm, and is at the same time wrought upon by his own desire of distinction, you may easily understand how little is to be expected from him. Gropper perhaps goes somewhat further, but he is one of those men who are always for half-measures, for taking a middle path between Christ and the world. But still there is that in him which make him useful in an affair of this kind. You know Eckius well enough. No one doubts but that this Davus will ruin everything by his restless interference. I must not indeed altogether despair, but I cannot avoid letting my thoughts revert to Worms. Certainly I shall be surprised if we obtain any result worth mentioning."

When the conference began, the emperor distributed a little work, which was so clear and moderate in sentiment, and so in

\* "Quod Contarenus mallet si potest nos sine cæde reprimere."

† MSS. Gen.

accordance with his own feelings, that it was calculated to satisfy all parties. It exhibited in twenty-two articles, and in the language of the Bible and the fathers, all the points in dispute.\*

Mathesius thus writes respecting it:—"While however many prudent worldly people were angry at the very idea of a conference, and others treated the subject of a union between the two religions with contempt, but not without ability, a book was composed, intended to please both parties, and which, after the death of Dr. Martinus, led to the establishment of the Interim. Many people pressed eagerly for a union, and the pious emperor would gladly have seen peace and quiet restored, threatening as was the approach of the Turkish forces towards Germany. Our own party appealed to the confession of Augsburg, and stated their reasons why they could not adopt this new, weather-changing, double-tongued book of collected religions. Legates were also despatched to Wittenberg, and were referred to Dr. Martinus. The doctor remarks how Satan had it in his mind to make a breach in our religion. Therefore as to what concerns the ceremonies and outward usages of the church, he counselled unity. With regard also to the articles of belief, which were not of his creating, but were the work of the eternal Son of God, he had nothing to alter or to yield. Thus he could never consider it advisable to allow dangerous, subtle, double-meaning words to slip in, for reducing the most important articles to uniformity. The Scriptures, he said, were like a ring, which, if broken in only one place, is nowhere whole."

Francis did what he could to hinder the union of the parties. It is unjust to accuse the protestants of having been mainly instrumental in preventing a reconciliation. The greatest resistance was on the side of the catholics, who were far from sincerely desiring ecclesiastical reform. Little satisfaction was felt at Rome in respect to the Ratisbone articles, and Contarini was badly rewarded for his faithful exertions. The protestants were as far from being satisfied; and Charles, hoping to obtain their help against the Turks in Hungary, gave them an explicit assurance that they should be exempted from the decisions of the diet. But he left Hungary to its fate, and the protection of Ferdinand of Austria, and undertook in the same year his unlucky expedition against Algiers, in which his numerous fleet and army were so remarkably destroyed by storms and tempests, and he himself so narrowly escaped.

\* It was ascribed to Gropper.

Let us now accompany Calvin to the old imperial city, already rendered so dear to us by the memory of Luther. He was sent thither by Strasburg; and thus, though a Frenchman, and still young, naturally timid and loving a retired life, he began to be engaged in the most important affairs of Germany. Sturm expressly states that Calvin was sent to Worms by the people of Strasburg:—"Some write, I hear, that Calvin has accompanied us to Worms merely for the sake of pleasure, and not as sent by a vote of the council. If this be said in ignorance, they who make the statement err; but if it be said intentionally, they are guilty of a falsehood. I here give the true account of the matter. Calvin's spirit greatly pleased Jacob Sturm, and it was evident that it would be vastly to the honor of our city, if we could have him to represent us in the assembly of the distinguished men at the diet. Another reason was, that the dukes of Lüneburg had named Calvin and me to be present at the discussion which might arise from the acts." Bucer's letter to the Genevese is to the same effect.

Caspar Cruciger, professor at Wittenberg, was also at Worms; and Calvin and he entered into a mutual explanation on the subject of the Lord's Supper. But here especially the two most accomplished theologians of the day, Melancthon and Calvin, learnt to know each other better, and formed an intimate friendship, which continued through life, and proved of great value to the church. Calvin had already, at Frankfort, become greatly attached to him. But it was now that the Wittenberger felt so impressed with the erudition and genius of Calvin, that he publicly bestowed upon him the honorable title of "the Theologian," in preference to all the others,—a distinction which had a real value as coming from the mouth of Melancthon. Their friendship was grounded upon mutual respect, and proofs remain to show that their confidence in each other never ceased. It appears however that there was more of love on the side of Calvin, more of esteem on that of Melancthon.

The following will give some notion of Calvin's able conduct. The dean of Passau, Robertus Moshamus, was present. This person, a mere sciolist, who had disputed with Calvin at Strasburg in the presence of Jacob Sturm, and with such little success, now renewed the dispute in the presence of Melancthon, and was again conquered. Sturmius writes on this: "Melancthon was present when Calvin overcame the dean of Passau at Worms." It was Calvin's admirable confutation of this papist,

which so delighted the evangelical party, and led Melancthon and the rest to give him the dignified title of "the Theologian."

We learn from a letter of Calvin to Farel, that the main subject of dispute was the real presence of the body of Christ, which Calvin denied. Sturmius also relates that it was here, where Melancthon first became personally acquainted with Calvin, that they formed that true brotherly friendship for each other which continued to unite them through life. Many proofs exist that Calvin did not conceal his opinions on the sacrament. He insisted that the expression, "This is my body," &c. ought not to be interpreted, according to Zwingli, *this signifies*, &c.

How unwillingly Calvin exposed himself to this unquiet sort of life appears from his declaration to Farel, that, far different from Luther, he was not created for strife and contention. "I have been dragged against my will to Ratisbone."\* So too, when sent as a deputy from Strasburg to that city, he thus speaks of his state of mind: "At one moment I tremble at our security; at another I am bowed down with terror, and thus every day brings with it some fresh anxiety, some trouble arising from the *δυσquieta*, or rather the *δυσquieta*.† Still I am not altogether spiritless."

With regard to the theological disputes at the diet, Calvin states that the parties engaged easily agreed with each other on the subject of original sin, and on that of free-will as represented by Augustine. The doctrine of justification was attended with greater difficulty; but the catholics yielded much. Then followed an argument respecting the church. Both parties agreed in the definition of a church, but not so on the power of the church, and at length the article was laid aside. The dispute was then renewed on the subject of the sacraments; that of the Lord's Supper presented insurmountable difficulties. Transubstantiation, with all its accompaniments, was rejected by the reformers. "My colleague," says Calvin, "who is always wishing for peace, was very angry that this question should be so unseasonably brought forward. Philip, on the other hand, distressed himself more and more when he saw things in such an unpromising condition, at the idea of giving up all hopes of union. Our friends having consulted together,

\* Feb. 19, 1540. MSS. Gen

† This is supposed to be said in allusion to the double and injurious marriage of Philip the Landgrave of Hesse.



summoned us to give our opinion distinctly and separately. There was but one voice and one sentiment. All agreed that transubstantiation is a mere invention, and the worship which it requires a superstition, at least very perilous, since not recognized by the Word of God. I was obliged to express my meaning in Latin, and rejected, though I had not heard the others, freely and without fear of offence, the doctrine of the real presence. I declared that the adoration of the host was intolerable to me. Be assured, in such affairs strong souls are required to support the weak. Pray earnestly to the Lord to aid us by his spirit, and so inspire us with courage. A paper written by Philip was handed in and given to Granvella, but rejected with hard words. If this be the commencement, what numberless difficulties have we not to expect, when we proceed to treat of private masses, the sacrifice, and the cup?"—(Ep. 32.)

"If we could be satisfied with a half Christ, we should soon agree. Philip and Bucer drew up formularies on transubstantiation with a double meaning and falsely colored, endeavoring to satisfy their opponents with glittering vapors. I do not like this mode of proceeding, even when there is any foundation for it. They hoped that if a door were but once opened to true doctrine, all this would be settled of itself. Thus they preferred leaping over the difficulty, and did not shrink from employing this deceitful kind of speech, than which there can be nothing more disgraceful. I testify to you and to all pious men, that they are both indeed animated by an excellent spirit, and are only anxious to further the kingdom of Christ; but they both are too ready to accommodate themselves to the opinions of the time. No one contends more boldly against the *in-breaded* (impanatus) God, than Brentius."

LETTER TO FAREL, JULY, 1541.

Melancthon and Bucer would fain have prevented his departure, but he returned to Strasburg. "Nothing was concluded at Ratisbone. From the moment that we found it impossible to agree on the question of the Lord's Supper, it was vain to hope to arrive at any understanding on the other subjects. You know that we were all satisfied, that transubstantiation is an invention, which can be reconciled neither with the Word of God nor with the nature of the sacrament. As the three evangelical theologians persisted in giving this answer, Granvella pressed Melancthon with hard words; and when nothing could be effected

with him, he hoped to succeed with the two others. Not gaining his object, he gave orders to proceed further. This being the case, the margrave of Brandenburg sent a messenger, a prince of Anhalt, secretly, but with the knowledge of the emperor, to Luther; for he hoped that the latter, in the present circumstances, might be more favorable to the papists than any of us are. I have not learnt what reply the messenger brought, but I am convinced Luther will not have answered badly. The three questions still remained, respecting the offering of the mass, private masses, and the sacrament in both kinds. Our opponents gave up the sale and the great number of masses, and required only one daily in every church; and this according to the principle, that a congregation is necessary to witness the mystery, and that the exhortation must be addressed to a community. The cup, it was conceded, should be given freely to every one who required it; but the question of the sacrifice of the mass was glossed over with a sophistical explanation. All this was rejected. Philip proposed other articles of an opposite tendency, but they were also set aside. The dispute afterwards turned upon confession: here our opponents yielded as to the necessity of an exact detail of principles, but still insisted upon the necessity of confession and absolution. Our friends gave in an opposite form. The invocation of saints, the primacy of the pope, the authority of the church, were also discussed with as little success. At the conclusion the emperor thanked the deputies with kind and candid expressions for having faithfully performed their task. Just at this time messengers arrived from Austria and Hungary, praying most humbly for assistance. The emperor commanded that attention should now be turned from the affairs of religion to other matters; and when I saw that a truce was thus granted us, I took advantage of the circumstance, and made my escape."

Calvin could effect nothing at Ratisbone on behalf of the persecuted believers in France, except that a letter was addressed to king Francis by all the German protestant princes, in which they acknowledged themselves the brethren of the sufferers, and entreated their deliverance with heartfelt earnestness. They said, that they had read the Confession of Faith, which these martyrs had laid before the tribunal at Grenoble, and that they must therefore "so much the more earnestly pray for them, since this confession was the pious and pure belief of the catholic church, which," they add, "we also acknowledge; and

therefore entreat that they who suffer for this belief may be set free, and that their lives may be spared. We have heard that pardon is promised to some, if they will renounce their confession. But this would be worse than death. We pray therefore that this condition may be moderated. The king himself knows how terrible it would be to him to do anything, in matters of religion, against his conscience."

This year, 1541, seems to have yielded a plentiful harvest for the confessors of the truth, and the martyrs in France who panted eagerly for the crown. In Crespin's Martyrology many are spoken of who deserve to be still remembered. For example, "Aymond de la Voye of Picardie was among the first who preached secretly in France, and founded the reformed church."\* Persecution was now also raging in England, and the inquisition was established in the Netherlands, where the customary punishment for men was to be burnt alive, and for women to be buried alive,—a horrible and psychologically skilful choice of punishments, originating in the brain of Spanish inquisitors.

Very different in character were Calvin and Melancthon. Calvin, from the warmth of his temperament, was more like Luther; but he stood to him in the relation of a son to a father, and did not venture to form an intimate union with him. The tender, gentle Melancthon however must have found a response in the strong soul of Calvin. The latter is commonly accused of too much sharpness and austerity, and is thus compared to his prejudice with Melancthon. But we may properly regard him as standing between Luther and Melancthon,—austere, on the one hand, obstinate from conviction in matters of supreme importance; but, on the other, yielding, with a warm heart and kindly disposition, and mild as Melancthon himself, when not carried away by his dread of consequences. The most amiable features of his character have hitherto been always overlooked. Still Melancthon stands higher than both reformers, making himself by his Christian tenderness and simplicity of disposition beloved even by his enemies; a proof of this, that Christian love, when pure, is not to be resisted. Calvin thoroughly understood him, and often sought his advice. Sometimes he was severe upon Melancthon, and chided him for any appearance of weakness, without however losing sight of his rare merit, as may be learnt from the following passage, and others of his writings on the subject of the sacrament:†—"Would to God we could

\* P. 129.

† Ep. 141, Nov. 1552.

speak together. Your ability, love of truth, and meekness are well known to me ; and the angels and the whole world bear witness to your piety. I do not doubt therefore but that we shall soon be wholly agreed on this subject. Fain would I come to you, and embrace you once more before we leave this world."

It seems that some degree of coldness existed at one time on the part of Melancthon, which occasioned an interruption to their intercourse. This arose from Calvin's expressing himself with too much severity, and accusing Melancthon on account of his irresolution. Melancthon was very sensitive. Calvin wrote to him, saying, that "their union, which arose from a corresponding feeling of piety, must remain forever and the same, and this because the interests of the church were intimately connected with it."

In the year 1554 especially, Calvin uttered several hard expressions against Melancthon, but they afterwards became more affectionately united than ever. Melancthon wrote to him the same year, to assure him of his entire agreement with him in the affair of Servetus. And subsequently, after the death of Melancthon, when Calvin, in the midst of strife and peril, still survived both the German reformers, and stood alone, a mark for all the enemies of the church in those troublous times, he addresses him in words full of mournful tenderness. The expressions alluded to occur in one of his writings, in which he gives loose to his feelings against his enemies, who left him so little rest, as was Melancthon's case, who wished himself out of a world in which there was so much theological strife and so little Christian love. The passage is highly deserving of attention. Calvin speaks with the tenderness of St. Paul when yielding himself to the emotions of his heart:—"O Philip Melancthon, to thee I address myself, to thee who art now living in the presence of God with Jesus Christ, and there awaitest us, till death shall unite us in the enjoyment of that divine peace. A hundred times hast thou said to me, when, weary with so much labor and oppressed with so many burdens, thou laidst thy head upon my breast, God grant, God grant that I may now die! But I, on my side, have also a thousand times wished that we had the happiness to live together. Our converse with each other would have certainly rendered thee bolder and more resolute in the struggle against wickedness and envy. Thou wouldst have resisted the machinations of falsehood with more strength and determination. Thus the malice of many would



have been kept within narrower limits,—the malice, that is, of those who, encouraged by your great benevolence, which they called weakness, took occasion therefrom to triumph proudly in their guilt.”

Calvin’s profound regard for Melancthon shows itself also in the dedication to his Commentary on Daniel, in which he describes him “as a man who, on account of his incomparable skill in the most excellent branches of knowledge, his piety, and his other virtues, was worthy the admiration of all ages.”\* He says in the letter from which we have quoted, “I know that I am far below you; but it is also true, that on whatever part of the stage God has placed me, our friendship cannot be destroyed without great injury to the church. But to consider ourselves only, learn from your own heart how bitter it must be to me to find myself separated from a man whom I love and esteem above all others, and whom God has not only nobly enriched with extraordinary gifts, to render him conspicuous in the sight of all the church, but has made him his chief servant, and appointed him to conduct the most important affairs.”

The noble and elevated character of this friendship is shown still more by the fact, that Calvin himself procured the publication of Melancthon’s *Loci* in French, and wrote a preface to it in 1546, and edited it again in 1551, although this was the only work likely to throw his own chief production into the shade, his views also not altogether harmonizing with those of Melancthon on the subject of election. So little ambition was there, so little desire of fame, or selfishness, in the heart of these remarkable men, who desired nothing so much as the salvation of the world. Calvin wished France to learn to love Melancthon as he loved him, and to be converted to the Lord through his work. Here also might we again say with Scaliger, “I leave it to you to judge, whether the man was great.” How much envy this friendship with Melancthon excited against him, appears from a letter of Calvin to Farel, who had again been guilty of some indiscretion. “I was surprised that Sulzer should say in his letter, that Melancthon’s judgment is everything to me. I cannot guess whence he has learnt anything of this kind, for I have so earnestly entreated you not to let a word escape you on the subject. It might be supposed that I was emulous of honor. But even this I leave to the Lord’s ordering.”

\* Op. 724.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CALVIN'S POETRY.—A LETTER OF CONDOLENCE ADDRESSED TO A FATHER.

THE erudite Calvin, while at Worms, composed a triumphal song (Epinicion), with which he greeted the new year, in the city where Luther had conquered at an earlier period. This little poem contains some fine hexameters, and describes the victory of Christ over the pope, who

“Digiti signo spatiorum concutit orbem,  
Nec minus est hodie quam fuit ante ferox.”

Christ conquers without weapons: *Ecce! quiescendo sternit, funditque silendo*. In the conclusion the Redeemer is introduced triumphing, and Eccius and Cochlaeus are led among polemics of their class, bound and humbled behind his chariot.

This poem would never have been heard of, for it lay buried and forgotten among the author's papers, had not the catholics of Tholouse inserted it in the list of forbidden books. So many inquiries were then made after this production, that Calvin, to satisfy public curiosity, allowed it to be printed. Here again we see the man of learning solacing himself in his hours of quiet with Latin verse; and the very contrast of Luther, the man of the people, who poured out his whole soul in a bold song, which he addressed to God as he went to meet his enemies, uncertain whether he should not share the fate of Huss. “A tower of strength is God our Lord.” “Take from us body, goods, honor, children and wife; let them all go—the kingdom of God must still be ours.” There are but few words in the song, but it has been sung for centuries, and will continue to be so, for it was dictated by the power of God. No other poetical composition but that here mentioned is found in the works of Calvin. The psalms were not translated by him. He had not the chivalrous feeling, the musical and poetical sense and spirit, which rendered Luther so worthy of love and admiration.\*

During the period above described a pestilential sickness

\* A letter was written by Luther at this time, descriptive of his feelings, and full of energetic sentiment. De Wette, v. 341.

raged in Strasburg, and carried off many of the inhabitants. A young man, named Louis Richeburg, died of this disorder in Calvin's absence: he appears to have been much beloved by him. An older friend, probably his instructor Claude, was also carried off. Calvin's wife was obliged to leave the city. He writes: "She flits day and night before my eyes, being as she is alone and comfortless, and without support."\* Of Claude he writes:—

"I cannot describe what grief I feel on account of my Claude. A true friend has been so necessary to me during the last two years,—one who might support me in all these various sufferings and anxieties. Claude always acted, not only in the truest but in the most friendly manner, so that I regarded him altogether as a brother. When I set out on my journey, my mind, as you know, filled with doubts, he solemnly promised to go whithersoever I might direct him, and that he would never fail me. When I think how very necessary a faithful adviser, one never absent from my side, is to me, and how rare such an example of love and faithfulness is, I cannot help thinking that the Lord has intended by the loss which I have now suffered to punish me severely for my sins."†

Calvin wrote a letter of condolence to Richeburg's father. It is conceived in the true spirit of the Gospel, and is far superior in pathos to any similar composition by Luther. As such, it may be recommended to all parents in similar circumstances. It seems to have been sent from Ratisbone.‡

"When I received the first news of the death of Claude and of your son, I was so troubled that for several days I could do nothing but sigh. And though I was able to support myself before God by those helps with which he arms us in times of distress, I was utterly prostrate in the sight of the world, as incapable of attending to my several duties as a man half-dead. On the one side I bewailed a true and affectionate friend, torn from me at a time when I most needed him, and with whom I was so united, that a stricter friendship cannot be imagined than that existing between us. Then, again, the other affliction; to see your son, who gave such bright hopes in the first

\* "*Quoniam capite suo caret.*"

† The plague in 1541 carried off several distinguished men; among others, S. Grynæus in Basel, and Andreas Carlstadt in Strasburg. W. Zwingli, the son of the reformer, Eusebius Ecolampadius, Capito and Zwick, died not long after.

‡ Ep. 19 of the year 1540 or 1541.

bloom of his years, snatched away, and whom I loved as a son, he loving me not less than a second father. This most severe distress was increased through the painful, oppressive anxiety felt for those whom God has left behind. I heard that the family was everywhere dispersed. The danger of Malherbe troubled me on his own account, and proved to me the peril in which the others were. I thought how cast down my own wife must be. Your Charles was always before my eyes; since with his good heart, and not only loving as he did his teacher and brother, but depending upon them as a child, he must have been sunk in the deepest sorrow. There was one comfort to me, the thought that he had my brother there to console him in this affliction.

"I could not however even think of this without feeling that both were still in much peril. Till the letters came, which assured me that Malherbe was out of danger, that Charles, my brother, and my wife were safe, I should have been overwhelmed with anguish, had I not cast myself upon the mercy of God, and sought support in prayer and holy meditation. I tell you this, that you may not suppose, when I offer you consolation, that it is an easy matter to prove oneself firm in the sufferings of others. I will not waste strong expressions on a sorrow which is strange to me, but show through what means I have found solace; nor will I bring forward the customary topics, so current in the world, that you should not weep for the dead, who were born to die, that you should exhibit in this trial that greatness of soul which may be looked for from your character, your noble talents, great learning, age, experience, and calling, and so find consolation in the remembrance of your earlier life. All this I leave. There is only one mighty and secure fountain of consolation on which men like you can depend, and which flows from the inward devout sentiment so powerful in your heart.

"God has recalled the son whom he only lent you as a pledge. There is here no room for the vain complaints of the foolish, O blind death! sad fate! inexorable destiny! God, who placed him here for a definite period, has recalled him. What God has done has not happened by chance, or without cause, but according to that counsel which cannot be other than good and right, and which will effect nothing but what is useful and salutary to us. Where righteousness and goodness operate, man must not oppose; but where our advantage is also united with



this righteousness, can there be greater ingratitude than not to accept that with quiet and humble feeling which it pleases our Father to ordain? Nothing is more distressing than when a man troubles himself with the questions, 'Why have we not acted differently? Why have we not gone elsewhere?' This would be right enough, if we had done something worthy of punishment. But if we cannot charge ourselves with guilt, these complaints are unreasonable. It is God himself who has taken thy son from thee: He who gave him to thee only under the condition, that thou instructing him here below, he should yet always belong to him. Therefore he has taken him out of the world, because it was useful to him to be removed, and profitable for thee, thou being purified and thy patience proved by this loss. If thou seest not this its usefulness, pray God, above all things, to show it unto thee. If it be his will to prove thee further, whilst He hides it from thee, let his wisdom stand higher than the weakness of thy spirit. With regard to thy son, if thou weighest the matter in thy soul, thou wilt see how difficult it is, in this most melancholy period, to go the right way, and will account him happy, being so early delivered, and before he was overpowered by the dangers which threatened him. He is as one who, having set sail upon the stormy ocean, is summoned back into port before he reached the open sea. In this respect a long life is not a benefit, but rather a loss, when, separated by a narrow path of years, we might, were they passed, enter into a better existence. God himself, the Father of us all, had already willed that Louis should pertain to his elect children. According to his boundless mercy He has made thee a partaker of his grace, that thou mightest see before his death the glorious fruit of the care which thou didst bestow upon thy son, and so learn that that blessing, 'I will be thy God, and the God of thy children,' belongs also to thee. He was instructed in the best manner, from his earliest childhood, as far as his years allowed, and had already made such progress that he awakened in us the fairest hopes of the future. His life and manners had deserved the praise of all good men. If he committed a fault, he readily listened to admonition and rebuke, and proved himself obedient to the instruction received. Was his temper occasionally rather haughty, yet it never approached to obstinacy, and the feeling of excitement was soon subdued. That however which most delights us is, that he so imbibed the principles of piety, that he had a real knowledge of religion, and

was impressed with the true fear of God. This great goodness of God towards thy son must serve rather to soften the pain of thy loss, than to make his death more distressing.

"These holy souls (Claude and Louis) have passed away, amid pious meditations and prayers, to communion with Christ. I should not wish to be free from my present sorrow on the condition of not having known them. It will supply me with holy, and I believe comforting, recollections to the end of my days. But thou wilt say, what matters it that I had a son who gave me such fair hopes, now that he is taken from me in the flower of his age? As if Christ himself had not gained this by his own death, that he should be the Lord of the quick and the dead. If we pertain to him, as needs must be, how can he fail to have over us the power of life and death? Though thy son, according to thy notion and mine, has had a short life, yet it must be enough for us that he has finished the course appointed him by the Lord. Let us not suppose, therefore, that he died in the flower of his age, when, in the sight of the Lord, he was as a ripe fruit. I believe that all those have attained to ripeness here, whom the Lord has seen fit to take away.

"Or wilt thou dispute with God, as if he tore any one away before his time? This reasoning avails for all, but especially for Louis. He was already of an age at which he could prove, by indisputable signs, that he was a member of Christ. As soon as he bore this fruit he died, and was snatched from our eyes. From the confused, uncertain shadows of life, he has been admitted into immortality, and far be it from thee to account those lost whom thou wilt meet again at the blessed resurrection in the kingdom of God; for they both so lived and so died that I am sure they are with God.

"Let us therefore hasten to reach the same goal which they have reached. There is no doubt that Christ will then unite them and us in an inseparable communion, in the incomparable participation of his glory. Nor is the consolation less which thou mayst derive from the reflection of what still remains to thee. Thy Charles is still left thee, a youth whom we all so esteem, that there is not one of us who would not wish for such a son. But, thou wilt say, it is difficult so to suppress a father's affections as not to feel pain at the death of a son. Nor have I wished thee not to grieve. We do not learn a philosophy in the school of Christ which would have us suppress all those feelings which God has given us, and turn men into stones. All

which we have said is only to this end, to persuade thee to set a term to thy grief, and to assuage it; that when thou pourest out thy heart in tears, as nature and fatherly love dictate, thou mayst not altogether resign thyself to grief. But I do not wish to speak as if I mistrusted thy good understanding, thy strength and greatness of soul: I have only wished not to be backward in my duty towards thee. If this letter be superfluous, as I believe it to be, thou wilt still accept this, perhaps too anxious, proof of affection with thy great and accustomed friendship. I have prayed Philip and Bucer to write to thee, hoping that such a mark of their love may not be disagreeable to thee."

## CHAPTER XIX.

CALVIN'S RETURN TO GENEVA.—APPLICATIONS MADE TO STRASBURG.—FAREL'S SEVERE LANGUAGE ON THE SUBJECT.—CALVIN'S PERSONAL DREAD OF THE CHANGE.—CALVIN'S INNER LIFE AT THIS PERIOD.

AT the time when Calvin was on his way to the diet at Worms, with Bucer, Capito, and Sturm for his companions, the people of Geneva were anxiously wishing for his return to their city.\* Beza relates that, "the Lord having pity on the place, visited it with his judgments, and openly punished those who were the cause of Farel's and Calvin's expulsion. One of the syndics was found guilty of promoting an insurrection, and endeavoring to escape through a window fell and broke his neck. Another was accused of murder, and beheaded. Two others, guilty of treason, and obliged to flee, were condemned in their absence, and described by the magistrate, in his letter to the preachers, as disturbers of the people.†

When these men no longer remained to hinder it, Geneva earnestly desired the return of Calvin and Farel. Neufchatel resolutely refused to give up Farel. The magistrate of Geneva

\* Fr. Biogr. Extraits des Régistr. le 20 Oct. 1540. "Pour l'augmentation et l'avancement de la Parole de Dieu, a esté ordonné d'envoyer quérir ès Strasbourg Maistre Johannes Calvinus, lequel est bien savant, pour estre nostre évangélique en cette ville."

† Epist. MSS. ad Tigurinos Pastores.

had entreated him to visit Strasburg, and use his influence with Calvin to induce him to return. Anxious for the church of Geneva, he furnished him with every means fitted to secure the success of his journey, and gave the messenger a pressing letter also, which he had written to Calvin himself.

Nor did the council fail to write to Calvin, who immediately showed their letter to Bucer and his other friends at Strasburg. These answered the Genevese, "We congratulate you, that so good a spirit has urged you to think of this your true pastor, and to ask for his instruction. For Christ himself is despised and mocked when such worthy ministers are rejected and contemptuously treated. Your state therefore betokens prosperity, when you own Christ in this his excellent instrument. Certain it is, that the soul of this good man has always been occupied with one thought, with anxiety for your salvation, and then even when it cost him the severest struggles, and might have required his blood. What he will now do, he knows as little as we, without whose advice he has hitherto undertaken nothing of importance, even when there was no necessity to ask it. To-morrow or the next day he will travel with us to Worms, to be present at the conference on the affairs of religion, which the emperor and king Ferdinand have appointed with the German princes, to discover some means for establishing union. And such is the present state of affairs, that if no way to peace is found through this conference, we must expect a great convulsion in Germany. But if religion receives any great shock in Germany, there is reason to fear it will suffer elsewhere as well. It would not be wise therefore, we think, for Calvin to resist the call with which the Lord has summoned him to this conference. We hope you will agree with us in this." They advised them in the mean time to call Farel and Viret to Geneva. The city of Geneva stood high in their estimation, for the Gospel might be thence diffused through France and Italy. They also exhorted the Genevese to make their peace with Bern. "Love is the duty and the ensign of Christians."\*

The Genevese made a new experiment, but the people of Strasburg strove to retain Calvin through the influence of Bucer, Capito and Sturm. Sturm relates the circumstance in his *Antipappus*, iv. p. 21. "While these things were going on at

\* Therefore with the "clarissimis dominis Bernatibus; quicquid, ut tam necessaria concordia nobis conservetur, dissimulandum, ferendum, concedendum sit, salvo tamen regno Christi."



Worms, letters arrived from the magistrate of Strasburg to the deputies Jacob Sturm and Matthias Pharrerus, which stated that Calvin's return was greatly desired by the Genevese. The deputies therefore were requested to consider how he might best be persuaded by Bucer, Capito and myself (Joh. Sturm) to remain among us. The magistrate would not grant the Genevese their desire; but the latter were not to be deterred from pursuing their object; and the Bernese, the brethren of Basel, and especially those of Zurich, were entreated to employ their influence on their behalf." Their pressing letter to Zurich still exists in the Geneva manuscripts. They say in this epistle, "that the people of Strasburg might be well aware that the ruin or preservation of the church of the Genevese would be the ruin or salvation of that of Strasburg. They besought them in the name of the Lord, to restore them their preachers; the magistrate and the whole of the people asked this favor of them; they trusted their salvation, as it were, to their hands." The composition is altogether excellent and edifying, and proves the earnest desire of its authors to secure Calvin's return.

On the first of May, 1541, the decree of banishment was reversed. Ami Perrini, a former syndic, and now a Genevese deputy, travelled from Strasburg to Worms, and showed the Strasburg theologians how good an opportunity they now had for diffusing the Gospel in France. The divines of Strasburg, especially Bucer, were won by these suggestions. In his desire to overcome Calvin's doubts, the latter even urged him to consider the example of Jonas.

Calvin had already sent a friendly answer from Worms, November 12, to the letter of the Genevese senate, dated October 22, 1540: "Where there," he says, "nothing but your kindness and affection to influence me, I could not feel otherwise than I do. But there is still another reason. It is the singular love which I cherish for your church, always bearing in mind that it was commended to me, and as it were committed to my charge, by God, and that it has therefore ever been my duty to labor for its good and its salvation."\*

Bullinger also wrote a very urgent letter to the people of Strasburg. Farel still further animated them. At last, when the Genevese pressed their petition for the third time, and Zurich, Basel and Bern addressed themselves to Strasburg and Calvin, Farel and Viret, not failing to urge him on the side of duty,

\* MSS. Arch. Eccles. Bern. 17.

Strasburg gave its tardy consent. Viret had already been six months at Geneva, and Calvin hoped to be able to retain him there. A famous knight, John Bock by name, was at this time living in Strasburg. Sturm praises him as a noble and well-read man. The clergy of Zurich left nothing undone to obtain his assistance in their efforts with Calvin. He rendered it of his own accord.

Some passages in Calvin's letters, written at this period, show what a conflict was going on in his soul, and in what light he considered his recall to Geneva. Thus to Viret he writes, "I could not read one part of your letter without laughing. It is that in which you exhibit so much care for my prosperity. Shall I go then to Geneva to secure my peace? Why not rather submit to be crucified? It would be better to perish at once, than to be tormented to death in that chamber of torture. If you indeed wish my welfare, dear Viret, pray cease from such advice as this." He expressed his pleasure, however, at finding that his friends took so much interest in his happiness. "I can hardly believe myself worthy of so much consideration, and yet I cannot help rejoicing that so many good people are concerned for my welfare."

To Farel he writes: "In order to fulfil, in some measure, my promise, to let you have a particular account of all which has lately happened, I have devoted this whole day to you. You would therefore have received well-filled and weighty letters, had not some unexpected business called me off. Of the affair of the Genevese we will speak together when you are here. The news that a kind of peace is established there, has certainly delighted me in the highest degree. I should only wish that they had united themselves with the Lord; for, as you say, while the Lord is not our bond of union, the union is accursed. I dare not yet pass any judgment on the Genevese ministers: they are much wanting however in some things; for you greatly err, if you take it for a sign of good feeling, that my answer to Sadolet's writing was well received. Suppose now that the news which others bring me is well-founded, namely, that they opposed themselves as much as they could, but that the council allowed the printing of the answer in spite of their opposition. This however gives me very little trouble: let them only so devote themselves to the performance of their duty, that they may anticipate me and others, and take from us all occasion for labor. It disturbs me little through whom the work of the Lord is

done, if it do but go prosperously forward. They assuredly err, however, if they trust to accomplish it without help; for they will scarcely get half through it, even with the assistance of others. I have always told you that the bare mention of my return terrifies me, and this I have said on more than one ground. It terrifies me not only because they obstinately rejected you, which I confess was the most painful of all to me; but there are many other things. . . . Indeed the further I go, the more plainly I see out of what an abyss the Lord has delivered me."

We subjoin a view of Calvin's inward life; his continued doubts and anxieties.

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Rich in instruction is the life of such a man as Calvin, and edifying is the view of the struggles endured by a righteous soul like his. The calls from Geneva were very urgent. Jacob Bernhard, one of the preachers there, wrote, February 1, 1541, that all the other ministers had left the city, and that he and Henry alone remained; so that he had not been able to restrain himself from exhorting the weeping people to turn in humble prayer to God the Lord, and to ask of Him, through Christ the chief shepherd, a shepherd who might be able again to help the church. "And not to lie," he continues, "I did not think of you, or hope that you might be this shepherd. The people did what I told them with the greatest devotion. Two hundred were assembled the other day, and all long for Calvin's return. The great council was summoned on the following day, and every voice was raised in favor of Calvin. 'Calvin,' they exclaimed, 'that righteous and learned man, it is he whom we would have as the minister of the Lord.' When I saw this, I could not but praise God, and acknowledge that it was from Him that the stone which the builders rejected was chosen to be the cornerstone. Come, therefore, thou worthy father in Christ; thou art ours: God has given thee to us: all sigh for thee: thou wilt see how pleasant, thine arrival will be to all. Delay not to come, and see Geneva,—a new people, renewed through God's grace,—Viret's work. God grant that thou delay not to come. Regard our church as worthy of thy help, otherwise will God the Lord require our blood at thy hands, for thou must be the watchman of the house of Israel with us."

How many struggles it cost Calvin to obey the voice! "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks," has been already inti-

mated. This state of conflict and uncertainty evidently shows, as he himself says, that he only brought himself by degrees to that greatness of spirit which was exhibited at length in the surpassing power of the will, and which strikes us with admiration to the last day of his life. He wrote to his friend Farel, from whom he concealed nothing, in October, 1540 :—

“You know that I have been so agitated this day by disquietude and anguish of soul, that I have not been half master of myself. Why I do not wish that which I commit to your faithful bosom to be spread abroad, you will easily perceive. As often as I think how unhappy I was at Geneva, I tremble in my innermost being when mention is made of my return. We must say nothing of the anxiety and disquiet by which we were continually agitated when we worked there together. I know well, that whithersoever I go, I must always expect to meet with suffering; and that if I will live for Christ, life must be a conflict. But when I think to what tortures my conscience was exposed, to what agonies I was subjected, and how I suffered the loss of all rest and quiet, I must pray you to forgive me, if I dread that place as destructive of peace and safety. You are, next to God, my best witness, and can testify that I have been held back by no other bond than this, that I dare not cast off the yoke of the calling which I believed to come from God. As long therefore as I felt myself bound by this yoke, I preferred suffering what is outward, to indulging that thought of change which frequently endeavored to insinuate itself into my mind. But now that by God’s grace I am free, who can blame me if I do not, of my own accord, cast myself again into the whirlpool in which I suffered such evils? I have even forgotten the art of managing large masses of people. It is but a small number with whom I have to do in this place; the greater part of them esteem me as their preacher and instructor; and if even this smaller charge be difficult to me, how much more so would the greater be. These however are not the hindrances which prevent my following the present call; for the more my soul holds back, the more do I suspect my feelings. Thus do I not allow myself to discuss the subject, and I beseech our friends not to draw me into any argument on the subject; and that they may consider it themselves the more freely and confidently, I hide from them a great part of my own inward sentiments. I solemnly declare, however, that I am not acting deceitfully towards God, nor seeking a pretence to escape; and as I desire the good



of the church of Geneva, I am ready to sacrifice my life a hundred times rather than betray it, while I leave it."

In a letter written by Calvin from Worms, "to his dear brother, Nicolaus Pareus,"\* he says, among other things, after expressing his joy at the prosperous state of the church at Strasburg during his absence, "May God so manifest his grace also towards the church at Geneva, that it may cease to disturb me any further. This afflicts me beyond measure that while I would so willingly help it, I know no means of doing so. I endeavor, however, as far as possible, to free my soul from this anxiety, till we return and Farel inform us how affairs at present stand."

In a letter to the same, December 14, 1540, he says, "With regard to the call to Geneva, my soul is in such perplexity and darkness, that I scarcely dare venture to think what I ought to do in this matter. When I allow myself, as I often do, to think on the subject, I can find no outlet. Involved in these perplexities, I have reason to suspect myself, and leave it therefore to others to determine for me. In the meanwhile we would beseech the Lord God to show us the right way. Farewell, dear brother; greet our friends for me in the most loving manner."

Farel however had now written to him, and aroused his conscience. We learn from Calvin's answer how Farel stood to him, what authority he had gained over him by the fervor of his zeal, and what a peculiar reverence Calvin felt for his judgment. Farel again destined him to labor at Geneva, in the same manner as when they first met there, for he felt deeply convinced that Calvin belonged to that city.

Calvin writes to him: "We were already prepared for our journey when your letters arrived. It was attended with so much confusion that I cannot describe it to you in words. As I could not answer you now, I have stated to Claudius and my brother separately what I wish, that they may write in my name. Being quite convinced that they have done this, I will not burden you with useless letters. I must acknowledge that the thunder and lightning which you, in such a wonderful manner, and I know not why, hurlest against me, have greatly moved and terrified me. It is surely known to you that, though I should fear the call, I do not flee from it. Why then was it necessary to assail me with such violence, that you almost belie

\* Pareus was deacon of the French church at Strasburg, and Calvin's substitute in his absence.

your friendship? My last letter, you suppose, cut off all hope. If this was indeed the case, pardon, I pray you, my inconsiderateness. I only wish to excuse myself, since, prevented by this unavoidable journey, I could not come immediately. As I had certainly not formed the plan which you ascribe to me, I feel sure of your forgiveness, as soon as you have better considered and inquired into the matter. So far as I understand, you would have wished me to go earlier to Geneva. But what if I could not by any means do this? A month and a half at least were necessary, if we wished to remain there some days; and this we must have done, unless we were willing to be laughed at. I beg you, therefore, to set bounds and limits to your excessive passion. Allow even that I had been able to make the journey, would it have been of any use without Bucer? You will see and acknowledge, if I err not, that you are carried away by an immoderate desire of speedy proceedings."

The following passages of the same date will serve still further to give us his true likeness at this decisive moment.

Calvin to Farel:—"My last letters show plainly enough how melancholy my soul was at that time. If therefore they betray something like ill-humor, forgive my unbelieving anxiety, which, as usual, renders me peevish and irritable. Even now, though becoming more collected by degrees, I feel but little ease. Indeed, ashamed as one is to acknowledge it, one is so fond of sighs and tears, that it is, in a certain sense, pleasant not to be altogether free from sorrow."

Again to Farel:†—"The Zurichers have again petitioned our friends here with great earnestness not to hinder my departure. They have also in very urgent letters, addressed to myself, entreated me not to reject this call. Our friends here easily understand that this is done through you. Discovering, therefore, as I do your unceasing activity in this affair, I cannot avoid believing that you are suspicious of me and the others, which is not right. In order to overcome this suspicion, I wrote at once to inform you that I have been sent to this place at the express desire of Philip. I might have refused if my conscience had suffered it; for, although I excused myself with all earnestness, I would not go to extremities, lest I might have the appearance of resisting both man and God. Hither therefore have I been sent, or rather driven. I am now as it were fettered, and these

\* MSS. Gen. Ratisbone, April 24, 1541.

† MSS. Gen. Ratisbone, May 4, 1541.

fetters I cannot for the time shake off, however greatly I may wish it. But I will endeavor to loose them by degrees. As I see that even haste is in your eyes delay, I originally formed the resolution of travelling direct to Geneva. Many circumstances however require me to go home first, and I will so arrange it as to reach Strasburg before the holidays. I will preach there during the fair, and then quickly take my flight. You cannot, I think, require more of me, unless perhaps it delights you to vex me by complaints,—satisfied if you do not kill me outright. In the mean time I shall endeavor to bear it, if I cannot induce you to treat me with a little more fairness. Still I would fain obtain this from you, not to scourge me so thoroughly, except when I deserve it. Nothing could be more respectful than the letter from Zurich, but believe me it was altogether superfluous. Our friends here show, in a variety of ways, that they are no less anxiously considering how to retain me in this city.”

When the deputies found him at Worms, he could not suppress his feelings. “As I shed more tears than I spake words, they entertained no doubt of my sincerity. I was twice compelled to silence and to refrain myself.” When he was somewhat calmer and more self-possessed, he wrote to Farel, “If I had the choice, I would do everything rather than what you wish, Farel. But as I am not left to my own choice, I bring my heart as a sacrifice and offering unto the Lord. I have always adjured our friends to forget me, and to keep in view nothing but the honor of God and the good of the church. There were not wanting pretensions to which I might have had recourse, little as I know how to invent such things. But I know that in this matter I have to do with God, who can see through such deceits. I therefore submit my bound and subject heart to the duty which I owe to God; and if I be deficient in counsel myself, I yield to the guidance of those through whom I hope God himself speaks with me.”

Calvin undertook his important office with repugnance, doing violence to his feelings, and in a peculiar sense sacrificing himself. This throws new light upon the somewhat rude energy henceforth apparent in his character, and to which he was originally a stranger. He seems to have formed the determination to raise the church of God, in spite of all difficulties, and with power and iron strength. With his moral energies, his zeal for truth, there grew a fixed hatred against the falsehood, disbelief, cunning, caprice, and levity, which he found at Geneva.

He required a sacrifice on the part of others, as he himself had made so great a one. Noble, powerful, and simple as he was, he wished others to be the same.

It appears from his whole conduct, and all his expressions at this period, that, far from supposing he could obtain any general influence, he only hoped, feeling his weakness, that he might become a faithful preacher and professor of theology. He did not sufficiently trust himself to suppose that he could keep even a small, comparatively insignificant city in order. In one of his later statements, in the year 1557, when his work was finished, he says, in reference to this period, and acknowledging the counsels of God, "Afterwards, when God had compassion on the city, and had appeased the unhappy disturbances, and quieted, by his might, the confusion and sanguinary plots which existed, I was convinced of the necessity of resuming my early position, however against my will. Although the safety of this church was so near my heart, that I would willingly have given my life for its sake, my fears suggested so many excuses, that I would fain have escaped from putting my shoulder again under this burden. At last the feeling of duty and faith prevailed, so that I again gave myself to the flock from which I had been torn. But with how much sorrow! with how many tears! with what anguish! God is the best judge of all this; and many were the pious people who would gladly have seen me freed from this pain, had they not been affected by fears like my own."

We here clearly see how the Holy Spirit worked in the whole of this remarkable history. Calvin's own will was to be broken, but the haughty levity of the city was first to be humbled to the dust, and the people were to be obliged to seek with prayers and tears the return of the man whom they had expelled, and whom they now feared every moment to lose, unless they obtained his pardon. It is in this manner that God forms the teacher for the community, and the community for the teacher, when something great is intended.

This is the turning-point and grand moment in the history of the reformer. Faith and his own will were here insufficient. For man to become an instrument in the hand of God, his self-will must be altogether sacrificed: he must offer him his bleeding heart. With such a preparation we may worthily assume the character of a reformer.

The 13th of September was the day on which Calvin returned to his distracted, now penitent, congregation. He was received



by the people and the magistrate, who, to do him honor, had sent forward a herald to meet him, with every demonstration of affection and triumph. The city regarded the event as an especial instance of the grace of God. Calvin had intended to deliver a speech on his arrival, to prove the innocence of himself and his colleagues; but he found that this would be altogether superfluous, the people readily confessing that they themselves were the guilty party. Calvin kept silent as to his enemies, although it would have been easy for him, at this moment, to have secured their expulsion from the city. The protocols of the 20th of September state that Calvin was entreated, in the most earnest manner, never to leave Geneva. It is added, that a cloth cloak was given him as a present.\*

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## CHAPTER XX.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CALVIN.—HIS MARRIAGE.—DOMESTIC LIFE.—POVERTY AND MODERATION.—PECULIARITIES OF HIS MIND AND TEMPER.

As Calvin's life at Strasburg was, as it were, the door to his subsequent course of labor, it will aid our design if we now exhibit a somewhat more exact representation of the man whose actions we are about to describe. For this purpose we shall mention, in connection with his domestic life, begun at Strasburg, several particulars affording a nearer view of his nature and character. As his faith attained maturity at an earlier period of his life, so we may now observe the development of all the fundamental principles of his intellectual constitution, which still continued to acquire firmness, energy and grandeur.

Calvin's life has been rarely understood, because it exhibits almost incomprehensible extremes, in the same manner as his system, which appears on the one side the most unpractical of systems, through the doctrine of election, and on the other the most practical, through the sternness of its morality. These

\* Strasburg yielded Calvin with difficulty. It confirmed him in his rank as citizen, allowed him to retain his office, and even the stipend. But the latter, according to his strict principles, he refused to accept.

contrasts in his life are partly the cause why he had such bitter enemies and such enthusiastic friends; and why no man in the world has been so variously judged, as people have directed their attention to the one or the other extreme of his character. But this renders a familiar acquaintance with his history so much the more interesting, and there is a greater charm in diligently separating the true from the false. They only can know this who are capable of feeling that the sublimest element in his doctrine, as well as in his intellect, was the deep religious feeling, of which we have spoken, and that it was with this, and not from thought or speculation, that he began his career. The main source of all the false opinions passed upon this great man may be traced to the notion, that he was a mere dialectician, passionately engaged in unfolding one idea. His life in God, his love of truth and purity of conscience are overlooked, while it was these alone which determined his conduct, and exercised a commanding influence on his practice, and on his zeal for the unity of the church.

To form some idea of Calvin's domestic life, we will take advantage of a remark made by Castalio in the work which he wrote in his own defence. Castalio had been received by Calvin, at Strasburg, in the most friendly manner. In the heat of controversy, the reformer accused him of ingratitude as a friend. Castalio allowed that he had lived in Calvin's house, but that at the end of a week he was obliged to remove, in order to make room for a lady, named Du Berger, who wished to have apartments there for herself, her son, and a man-servant. "You asked me in a friendly way to give up my chamber to the servant; I did so, and paid my cost. After some time I was requested by your people to come and serve the servant, who was my countryman, and had been taken sick. I attended him till his death, which happened at the end of seven days, and I boarded at your table." He subsequently relates, that he rendered Calvin's family much service when the former was at Ratisbone.

It appears from Castalio's account, that Calvin, as a professor, received some young people into his house, and that when he was married, he admitted into his family such Christians as wished, spiritually speaking, to feed of the crumbs which fell from his table, richly furnished as it was from his own stores of life. How poor he was in a worldly sense, at this time, appears, as we shall see, from his letters to Farel. His necessity indeed was so great that he was driven to sell his books. The stipend

which he received must have been very small. His correspondence cost no trifling sum. The publication of his works brought but little in, and he would take nothing of his friends. It appears from frequent allusions, that he superintended the education of several young persons in whom he felt an interest.

In a letter, sent some time after to Bullinger, he mentions a circumstance which occurred with the deputies of the Waldenses: "Sixteen years ago the Waldenses sent us their Confession. Both the excellent Bucer and I were well-pleased with this; but, subsequently, a copy was shown me, in which I saw much to dislike, and which I could not admit." He wrote also to Farel: "The Waldensian brothers owed me a crown-dollar, a part of which I lent them, and the other part gave to their messenger. I have now told them to give the money to you. If they have done so, keep it, that I may be so much less in your debt. What remains, I will pay as soon as I can. Such are my present circumstances that I cannot pay a farthing. It is wonderful how much money is drawn from me by unexpected calls, and still I must live on my own, if I do not wish to become a burden to my brethren. For my health, which, out of love, you so anxiously commend to my care, I cannot for my own part feel so anxious."

In a following letter (Ep. 15, April, 1539) he says, "Whether I remain here or go farther, cares, troubles and difficulties press upon me. I allow it is pleasant to see that the brethren are so anxious about me, and so ready to help my poverty out of their need. It cannot be but that I must feel rejoiced at such proofs of love; but I have resolved not to accept either their or your benevolence, unless compelled by a harder necessity. Wendelinus the printer, to whom I sent my little work, will give me sufficient to meet the extraordinary expenses. My books, which are still at Geneva, will satisfy my landlord till next winter. The Lord will take care of the future. Formerly, when I had numberless friends in France, there was not one who would have offered me a farthing; but if they had done it, they would have enjoyed, at no expense, the luxury of acting generously, for it would have cost them nothing to offer what I would not have accepted. At present I shall content myself with your kindness and that of the brethren. I shall accept the help as affording me a claim, if I need it. On the other hand, I beg you to be satisfied with my acknowledgment of your goodness. It vexes me that the crown-dollar is lost."

Calvin did not forget, in after times, the kindness of Wendelin. He entrusted him with the publication of all the Epistles of St. Paul, in gratitude for his liberality, when his works, as yet, brought no return.

Calvin's letter from Strasburg shows what his situation then was: "Nothing new has happened since you were here, except that, on the day you set out, about three hours after you left, my pupils made an effort to increase my income. But the effort failed, and I am therefore no richer than I was. If any one can be found who will buy my books, pray sell them, but not for a less sum than ten, or at lowest nine batsen (we suppose each volume), unless some one be ready to take a great number; you may then let them go for eight. The carriage has already cost much, and will cost more before they reach you."

In a letter to Farel, full of trifling statements, illustrating the state of affairs at Strasburg, mention is made of a little excess of Calvin's: "F . . . declared to-day that he would separate from the consistory; when I was invited by a friend to supper, and did not return till long after eight, having enjoyed a very good repast. You will therefore receive a letter from a man whose head is not quite clear enough for writing." The bookseller Michael was to send the remainder of Calvin's books with his brother's clothes: "If they come to you, open the package, and if you can sell more books, do so. Send the rest to Basel. As he complains that my book sells badly, and that he has more copies than he can use, I have written to him to say, that he may send you a hundred. Let me know whether he have done it. I will rather subject myself to this difficulty than that my credit should suffer. There is as much active life here in Strasburg as with you. Several university laws were transgressed a short while back. Our French students, some even of those who live with me, were near being expelled. It will be told them to-morrow, that if they will not obey they must remove. You see they came to this place with the intention of leading a free life. The church must therefore get more authority to bridle their wicked passions. You understand however that something must be allowed to folly, and that discipline must not be so strict as to prevent people from playing the fool in any way."

In the year 1539-40, during which Calvin was so much occupied with his Commentary on the Romans, the duties of his office, his lectures and sermons, his journeys and correspondence, he yet found time for something besides, that is, matri-



mony. He speaks on this subject to his friend, in a letter dated February 6, 1540, but this was not for the first time. In a letter written March 19, 1539, he opened his mind to Farel, and drew a picture of the kind of woman he should wish for his wife. From the manner in which he speaks, it is easy to discover that he had been long employed with these thoughts. As his character is but little known in this respect, and there is something peculiar in it, we must take advantage of the only means we possess to trace the development of his mind and feelings. In the letter to Farel, February 6, 1540, after relating several events of a political nature, he says: "In the midst of all these important movements, I enjoy such tranquillity that I am venturing to think of marriage. Some one proposed to me a young lady of noble family, rich, and above my rank. Two reasons kept me from forming a union with this lady. In the first place, she did not know our language; and, in the next, I feared she might think too much of her rank and education. Her brother, a very pious man, insisted upon it; but only because he was so blinded by regard for me, that he altogether neglected every other consideration. His wife rivalled him in his efforts to accomplish the union, so that I should have been almost compelled to give my hand, if the Lord had not made me free. When I answered, that I could take no step unless the young lady promised to employ herself diligently in the study of our language, she expressed her wish to have time for consideration. On this, I immediately sent my brother, with a good man, to offer my addresses to another lady, who, if she comply with their request, will bring me a great dowry, though without any wealth, for she is wonderfully praised by all who know her. If she come, as we certainly believe she will, we shall not defer the marriage beyond the 10th March. How rejoiced should I be if you could be present to bless the union! But as I gave you more than enough trouble last year, I dare not ask it. If any one of the brethren, however, intends to visit us, I wish it might be at that time, so that he might stand in your place. Although I should be laughed at, were it to turn out that I have been deceived in my hopes, yet, as I trust the Lord will help me, I speak of the thing as certain."

Soon after (February 26, 1540, MSS. Gen.) he wrote to Farel, "Would that it were permitted me to pour out my feelings on your friendly bosom, and again to hear your advice, that we might be better prepared! You have the best opportunity for

coming hither, if our hopes respecting the marriage be accomplished, for we expect the maiden immediately after Easter. But if you will really promise me to come, the ceremony shall be put off till your arrival, there being still time enough to let you know the day. First then, I ask it of you, as the greatest kindness, to come; next, that you write word definitively that you will come, for it is necessary, at all events, that some one come to bless the marriage. I would fain however have no one but you. Consider therefore whether I seem worth enough to you to undertake this journey."

In another letter to Farel, dated June 21, 1540 (MSS. Gen.), there is a strange piece of news respecting the approaching marriage. The time was fixed, Farel invited, but still no bride was there. "The bride is not yet found, and I doubt whether I shall continue to seek one. Claudius and my brother formed a contract for me with a young lady; but three days after they returned, something was told me which induced me to send my brother back, in order to loose me from the engagement."

With what tenderness Calvin could speak of a young maiden, and how wrong it is to regard him as a hard, severe, unfeeling scholar, who had all his life long no love for the beautiful, we may learn from a short letter which he wrote to Viret respecting a young lady whom Viret was about to marry. Calvin entered into the minutest circumstances connected with the choice of a wife for his friend, and was quite enraptured with the image of the young person whom he was likely to choose: "Write soon, and let us know your decision. The more we inquire, the more we hear in favor of the young maiden whom you regard as such a treasure. I am now therefore endeavoring to learn the will of her father. As soon as we know anything certain, I will inform you. In the mean time be prepared. Perrini is not pleased with this marriage, because he would have you take Rainé's daughter. This renders me the more anxious to see him without delay, and I think he will speak with me to-day. We have both been invited to supper by Corné, and under some polite pretence I shall manage to introduce the subject. It would be better if you would allow me to ask her immediately. I have seen her twice. She is very modest and well-behaved. Her countenance and whole bearing are wonderfully graceful; and all people speak so much of her virtues, that little John told me he was in love with her himself. Farewell: the

Lord guide you by his counsel, and bless us in an undertaking of such vast importance."

He relates in a letter sent two days after to his friend, how he spent the evening in company with Perrini and Cornæus, who wished Viret to marry some other lady, thereby increasing the difficulty of an arrangement: "I am full of anxiety, and know not exactly how to act." He stated his wish to ask at once the young lady's consent, but under the condition that Viret should first meet her. "Write to me by the earliest messenger. It is my opinion we should not delay, and that you ought to come as soon as possible. We hear nothing of the young lady but what is calculated to strengthen your resolution. There is also nothing to object to the father and mother. As for the other lady (some one proposed to Viret by the chief men of the city), there is more to fear. But it is your affair; you are free to choose. At all events, there is not a man on earth whose own interests lie nearer his heart than this affair to mine." The affair however was put an end to by the determination of the father to see his only daughter married in Geneva, and not in Lausanne. Calvin was very angry that the old gentleman should create a difficulty on this account. But in order to comfort Viret, he concludes by hinting, "that a friend had spoken to him of a widow, who, according to his opinion, would please him very much."

From a postscript to the letter here quoted, it appears that Viret adhered fondly to his earlier attachment. Calvin speaks continually, in letters to his friends, on the subject of marriage, and shows thereby the active interest which he took in the domestic happiness and circumstances of his friends. It is not improbable that many of his female acquaintances might look to him for advice and guidance.

He wrote to Viret in September, 1548 (MSS. Gen.), "I should rejoice to find for our Merlin some really excellent woman. But when I look about, I can scarcely see one whom I should venture to give him. If it were agreeable to him to make a journey to this place, under some other pretence, he would be better able to judge for himself, and might consider the matter with me. He could trust his thoughts to me in full confidence and friendship. Something might turn out. I know nothing better than this counsel."

With what youthful liveliness the first reformers treated the

subject of marriage, appears also from Farel's answer to Calvin, July 1, 1558 (MSS. Gen.): "I could name to you some young ladies of good birth and well brought up; but as they are very poor, I have not ventured to do it. I know of none who are, at the same time, good-looking, amiable and rich. I have mentioned only three in my letters. Time will, perhaps, bring me acquainted with more. I shall take good care that the young man be well provided for. Two live near you; they have an engaging appearance, and are well brought up; and though they have no great dowry to bring, they would not come altogether poor. If anything occurs here I will immediately inform you, and if you had set spurs to your horse and come hither sooner, you would have been able to inquire more conveniently for yourself."

#### CALVIN'S MARRIAGE WITH IDELETTE DE BURES.

Calvin's zeal for the conversion of the Anabaptists exhibited itself at Strasburg. Among those converted by him was a certain person named Störder, from Liege; he did not live long after his conversion, and Calvin married his widow at Strasburg, and, as it seems, at the advice of Bucer.

Idelette de Bures was the name of the woman deemed worthy of standing by the reformer's side through the most stormy period of his life. Beza calls her a worthy, noble, well-read person. This happy union lasted only nine years, which is so much the more to be lamented, as the influence of such a woman and of domestic life would certainly have operated beneficially, even to the last, on Calvin's character.

As we know little circumstantially of Luther's marriage and domestic life, so have we as little information respecting Calvin's. There is however much to interest us. We have not indeed in this case the high-spirited husband before our eyes, who, in defiance of all the world, espoused a nun just out of the cloister; who became the father of seven children, whose descendants lived long among us, and who regarded his wife with such a jocund humor that he called her his "mistress Kate." Luther was to be considered as a pattern in the evangelical community of a Christian married pastor. His union with Catherine von Bora is described in the most agreeable manner in his letters. Still, Idelette de Bures seems to have been very superior to Catherine von Bora in education and dignity, and as



she belonged to Calvin, a memorial shall be dedicated to her honor.

What Calvin thought of his future wife, and how earnestly and holily he meditated upon marriage, we see from a letter to Farel, dated May 19, 1539: "Remember what I expect from one who is to be a companion through life. I do not belong to the class of loving fools, who, blinded by passion, are ready to expend their affection on vice itself. Do you wish to know what kind of beauty alone can win my soul? It is that in which grace and virtue, contentedness and suavity, are united with simplicity. And I can hope that a woman with these qualities would not be negligent of my general well-being."

Calvin wished his marriage with Idelette to be celebrated with all possible solemnity and pomp. This was, probably, in mere accordance with the fashion of the times. The consistories from Neufchatel and Valengin were invited to Strasburg, in order to be present at the feast; and they accordingly sent their representatives. Many of Calvin's expressions show, that the union between himself and his wife was of a high and noble character. It was no trifling thing for him who praised so few, who never spoke unprofitably, and who weighed so well the words which he used, to say of his wife, that she was a remarkable woman—*singularis exempli fœmina*.

One son only was the offspring of this marriage, and he died at a very early age; but Idelette had had several children by her former husband; these Calvin loved as his own, and Idelette commended them to his care with her dying breath. The catholics have said much respecting the unfruitfulness of this marriage. Thus Brietius, a jesuit, says, "He married Idelette, by whom he had no children, that the life of this infamous man might not be propagated." But many authentic witnesses testify to the contrary. Drelincourt says in his defence of Calvin: "P. Masso and Jaques Desmay state that Calvin had no children, and even Florimond de Raimond, after having spoken of the marriage of Calvin with Idelette, adds, 'this marriage was condemned to a perpetual sterility, though Idelette was still in the prime of life.' But M. de Beza says in his Life of Calvin, that he had a son who died immediately after his birth, and Calvin himself says the same in his reply to Baudouin."

It was slanderously said of the reformers that they only began the reformation, as the Greeks the war of Troy, for the sake of a

woman. To this Calvin earnestly replies: "Our adversaries accuse us of having undertaken a sort of Trojan war against the papacy, for the sake of women. To pass over other considerations, they must at least exonerate me from such a charge. I am perfectly at liberty to cast back their foolish tittle-tattle. There was never anything to hinder me, even under the tyranny of the papacy, from taking a wife, but I remained many years without doing so. My wife, a woman of rare qualities, died a year and a half ago, and I have now willingly chosen to lead a solitary life."

The following is from a letter to Viret, without date:—"The brother will tell you in what anguish I write to you. My wife's confinement has been attended with the greatest danger. It was somewhat premature. May the Lord look down upon us with mercy." In the "Letters to the Seigneur of Fallais" (p. 48), Calvin says, "I thank you humbly for the very gracious offer which you make me respecting the baptism of our child."

In very many of the letters which he wrote to his friends, the reformers, he sends his greetings to the ladies. This is especially the case in those to Viret, who was married; and an indication is thus given of the friendly domestic sort of intercourse which existed between these two excellent men. The following passage occurs in a letter which Calvin wrote to Viret soon after the death of his infant son:—"Greet all the brethren, and also your aunt and your wife, to whom my wife sends her best thanks for the friendly and holy consolation which they have rendered her. She could only write by means of another, and even to dictate a letter would be very painful to her. The Lord has indeed inflicted a grievous wound on us by the loss of our little son, and we feel it bitterly. But He is a Father and knows what is necessary for his children. Farewell! The Lord be with you. Ah! if you could hasten hither, how gladly should I have half a day's talk with you!" The allusions to domestic concerns go hand in hand in every letter with those which refer to public business, however important it may be.

When his wife was ill, and he expected a melancholy termination to the disorder, he wrote to Viret: "I desire to be remembered to your wife. Mine is her companion in a lingering sickness." In another letter: "Greet thy wife. As soon as she is confined, let her send for mine." Afterwards: "It grieves me that my wife has been such a trouble to you; for she has not, I suspect, been able to render much help to yours, her own

health requiring the constant assistance of others. This only is my comfort, that I am convinced she is not disagreeable to you."

After speaking on matters of pressing importance, he says, "I sympathize with your little daughter; but she will forgive her mother when she has a brother or sister born to her. The weaning I hope is well over." In letters afterwards written he always greets "the little girls." The following expressions also occur: "My wife commends herself to your prayers. She nourishes a lingering disorder, the issue of which I greatly fear." "My wife's sickness continues as usual." "My wife, who is struggling with a lingering disease, greets you." At the end of a letter to Viret: "My wife commends herself to your prayers. She is so overpowered by her sickness that she can scarcely support herself. Frequently she seems somewhat better, but she soon relapses. My colleagues greet you. Cop wishes you to come, if possible, to his wedding. You know that we have given him the widow of Gurin to wife."

We learn the character of Calvin's wife as that of an exalted Christian soul, through the account given us of her death by Calvin himself. In this narrative he also shows how tenderly his affections were fixed upon her. The letters referring to the present period prove the severity of his grief, and, which is remarkable, he accuses himself of yielding to his weakness.

The following is a letter to Viret, dated April 7, 1549:—"Although my wife's death has pressed hard upon me, I seek as much as possible to conquer my sorrow, and my friends contend with each other to afford me consolation; but, in truth, neither their nor my efforts can accomplish what we wish. Useless however as it may be, it is a greater comfort to me than I can describe. You know the tenderness, or far rather ought I to say, the weakness of my heart, and you are well aware therefore that if I had not exercised the whole force of my spirit to soften my agony, I could not have borne it. And indeed the cause of my distress is not a trifling one. I am separated from the best of companions, who, if anything harder could have happened to me, would willingly have been my companion, not only in exile and in want, but in death itself. She was a true help to me in her life in the duties of my office. She never opposed me in the slightest matter. As she had no anxiety for herself, so, through her whole sickness, she avoided letting me see that she had any for her children. But as I feared this silence might uselessly increase her care, I began myself, three days before

her death, to speak on the subject, and promised to do for her children whatever lay in my power. She immediately answered that she had already commended them to God; and on my replying, that this would not hinder my caring for them, she answered, 'I am sure you will not forsake the children who are commended to God.' But yesterday I learnt that when a friend requested her to speak with me respecting the children, she answered her briefly—that the one thing necessary was that they should be God-fearing, pious people. 'It is not necessary to make my husband promise to bring them up in holiness and the fear of God. If they be pious, he will be to them an unsought father; if they be not, they do not deserve that I should pray for them.' And this greatness of soul will indeed influence me more powerfully than all the directions she could have given me."\*

On the 11th of April, a few days after the event, Calvin wrote from Geneva to Farel: "You have no doubt heard already of the death of my wife. I do what I can, not to sink altogether under the weight of this misfortune. My friends leave nothing undone to lighten, in some degree, the sorrow of my soul. When your brother set out from hence, we were already beginning to despair of her life. On Tuesday, when all the brethren were with me, they considered it would be most proper for us to engage together in common prayer; this was done; and when Abel exhorted her, in the name of all, to faith and patience, she gave us to understand, by the few words which, weak as she then was, it was possible for her to utter, what were the thoughts occupying her mind. I added a brief admonition of my own, referring to her condition. On the day when she rendered her soul to God, our brother Bourgoing addressed her, about six in the evening, with Christian feeling. While he was speaking, she cried from time to time (so that all could easily see that her heart was lifted up far above this world), 'O glorious resurrection! O God of Abraham, and of all our fathers! Believers have hoped in Thee, from the beginning, and in all times; and no one has been shamed by his hope. I also will look for thy salvation.' These short sentences were rather murmured than uttered. She did not repeat the words of others, but expressed in some few of her own, the thoughts which had employed her soul. About six o'clock I was called from home; at seven, when she had been moved, she began to grow weaker and

\* Viret's affecting answer appears later, in the year 1549.



weaker. When she felt that her voice was likely soon to fail, she said, 'Let us pray to God; let us pray. Do you all implore God for me.' At this moment I returned. She could no longer speak, but still gave signs of the devout feeling of her heart. After I had said some little on the grace of Jesus Christ, on future happiness, on the life we had passed together, and on our going home, I collected myself for prayer. She listened with perfect consciousness and attention to my words, and as edified by them. Shortly before eight she fell asleep and slumbered so tranquilly that those who stood around her bed could scarcely tell the last moment of her life. Although I am very much bowed down, I continue to fulfil diligently all the duties of my office; and God in the mean time has prepared new struggles for me."

Even after seven years he still expressed the same grief. Thus we read in a consolatory letter, written in 1556, and addressed to Richard de Valleville, minister of the French congregation at Frankfort: "I know well enough from my own feelings, when I think of the affliction which I suffered seven years ago, how acute and burning the wound must be which the death of your excellent wife has inflicted. I remember how difficult it was for me to master my grief. But you know well what means we must employ for overcoming immoderate sorrow. It only remains for me therefore to pray you to use them. Among other grounds of consolation this is not the least (although our earthly nature be the more troubled thereby), that you passed a portion of your life with a woman whose society you may expect to enjoy again whenever you leave this world. Consider, therefore, that her example has taught you to die a good death. . . . But since our chief consolation must always be the wonderful providence of God, through which our afflictions are made serviceable to our salvation, and as He only separates us from those whom we love in order to re-unite us with them in his heavenly kingdom, so, pious as you are, must you submit yourself to his will. May the Lord of all consolation soften your solitude by the grace of his Spirit, guide you, and bless your labors." \*

These letters show us the great man in his ordinary domestic life. We see that esteem and friendship formed the foundation of his union; and where such greatness of soul and such pure Christianity exist on both sides, domestic life cannot fail to be in the highest degree happy.

\* Epist. 230, Ed. Laus.

In order however to know Calvin as he was, and to form a correct idea of his domestic life, we must observe that his mode of living was not only simple, but characterized by poverty. Many testimonies exist to this effect. Poverty was with him a principle, and when he received it was only to give.

How greatly poverty becomes a Christian is shown by Tauler in his peculiar style: "If thou wilt be perfect, sell what thou hast and give it to the poor. Christ requires not only poverty of spirit, which is necessary to salvation, but sparseness of body; the surrender of everything earthly, even that which seems indispensable and necessary. Give it to the poor, to those who can give nothing in return, and God will reward thee for it." This poverty has been practised by many true Christians in the Catholic church, often to excess; often with purity of intention. In no one does it appear more amiably than in Vincentius, who says, "There is a hidden grace in poverty, and happy is he who knows how to find it." In his hospice of St. Lazarus, Vincentius might have served for an example to every evangelical minister, and stood higher by his willing poverty than Fenelon himself, who did not despise the grandeur of a bishopric. But protestants also have sought and practised this voluntary Christian poverty: Fletcher, Wesley, and many other Methodists may be mentioned as instances. Gichtel also is another, who, great in his way, was satisfied to become a servant, and despised the greatest riches.

Calvin sought by his example to inculcate esteem for this poor and humble kind of life, but in this, as in everything else, in the strongest opposition to the popish, monkish spirit of his times. How earnestly he felt in this respect we have seen already in his description of his future wife, among the first of whose virtues he required to find frugality. Although he was very poor, he would never accept a present but for the poor. He refused the stipend which the Strasburgers would have continued to pay him, and would not accept the support proffered by the Genevese council.

We anticipate here in order to draw a more perfect likeness. He received at Geneva only just sufficient to support him with the greatest parsimony. His pay consisted of fifty dollars, twelve measures of corn, two tuns of wine, and a dwelling-house. The state-protocol of October, 1541, says, indeed, "that a considerable stipend was granted to Calvin, because he was very learned, and visitors cost him much." But what proves that

this income was very small, according to the price of things at that time, is the circumstance, that the council frequently found it necessary, from mere kindness, to lend him a helping hand. True however to his principles, he refused ten dollars offered him when he was sick in 1546, and two which the council wished him to accept for his journey to Bern, in 1553, on the affairs of the republic. On December 28, 1556, the council sent him some wood to warm his chamber; he carried them the money for it, but they would not take it. The same body sent him, May 14, 1560, a tun of the best wine, because he had only what was very indifferent. He borrowed however twenty-five dollars to meet the expenses of his sickness, and on the 22d of June, 1563, earnestly entreated the council to receive them back.\* He protested indeed, "that he would never again enter the pulpit, if he were compelled to retain another indemnification." Twenty dollars, that is, almost half the amount of his stipend, he had formally rejected,—a plain proof this of his desire to remain poor. In a letter to Farel (January 21, 1546), he expressly relates how he was once obliged to argue with an anabaptist before the council. This person had treated him badly, till at length driven into a corner, and being full of malice, he answered Calvin, that all the clergy led a life of luxury. The reformer replied, and the anabaptist then called him a miser, which excited general laughter; "For it was recollected what I had given up this very year, and that I had sworn I would not preach again if I were pressed any more on the subject. It was also known that I had refused additional presents, and had given up twenty dollars from my income. All fell upon him when they heard this."

He gave another proof, in the year 1558, of his having resolved on leading a life of poverty. His brethren in office having prayed him to entreat the council to augment their stipend, he requested it to keep back a part of his own, and so make all the salaries equal.

No trace exists in his letters to lead us to suppose that Calvin sold any manuscript to a bookseller, and gained money in that manner. It seems, indeed, as already mentioned, that he let Wendelinus, out of thankfulness, have his Commentaries, because he had had the kindness to print his earlier works. He needed help in this way, as we have seen, in the publication of his first work on Seneca.

\* *Régistres de la République.*



Even catholics bear testimony to the severe life which he led. Florimond de Raimond says: "With a body dry and attenuated, he had a mind ever green and vigorous; ready for service, always prepared for attacks. He fasted greatly even in his youth. Never seeking society, but always retired, Calvin had hardly an equal." He was so assiduous in completing his 'Institutes,' that he often passed whole nights without sleeping, and days without eating." This account agrees altogether with that of Beza, and is so much the more interesting, as it shows what a striking contrast existed between the life spent by Calvin and the joyous, social life led by Luther, for whom every day the wine-goblet was filled from the town council's cellar; who spoke as readily at the table as in the pulpit of divine things, and whose conversation at such times was remarkable for its edifying character.

Calvin, who loved poverty, had a right to inculcate it. Thus, for example (Instit. IV. c. iv. s. 8), after having shown how the early bishops expended the riches of the church on the poor and oppressed, and for the ransom of slaves, he quotes the holy Ambrose, who says, "The Lord who sent his disciples forth without money, has also gathered his churches together without money." From this thought he draws the conclusion, that the churches possess revenues for the necessitous only, and that they themselves must be poor. He argues in the same manner in his little work against bishop Roux: "The clergy who live in wealth are the worst of thieves." If he who is caught breaking into his neighbor's house to rob him of his money, is whipped by the hangman, what gibbet is sufficient to punish the wretched fraud of which you are guilty? When, on the one side, you have stolen what was only due to you in consideration of your performing the duties of your charge; and, on the other, are guilty of robbing and pillaging from house to house? Cursed be the pastors who only feed themselves. Ought they not to feed the sheep? But you have eaten the milk, you have killed the fat of the flock, you have clothed yourselves with the wool, and have not fed the flock."

Drelincourt very beautifully remarks, in reference to Calvin's poverty, "I find nothing, with the exception of his learning and his zeal, which glowed intensely to his last breath, more worthy of admiration than the simplicity of his life, and his contempt for the world and its riches. I have read the following words written by men of the Romish faith, who had calculated Calvin's nativity (Flor. de Raimond, l. vii. c. 8): 'The honor of



the Roman pontificate was promised Calvin at his birth.' But not to amuse ourselves with these follies, I am certain, and no man of understanding will dispute the truth, that as Calvin was one of the most distinguished men of the age, he might have pretended to the highest dignity in the catholic church, if he had remained in its communion; but, like Moses, he considered the shame of Christ a far greater glory than all the treasures of Egypt. He could say with Paul, 'We are poor, but we make many rich.' And he did indeed endow a vast number of souls with the riches of heaven, through the crucified Christ. Thus, poor as he was, he made many rich, as Erasmus said of Luther, *Lutherus pauper, multos facit divites*. For himself one may truly say, he lived and died poor."

It was also currently reported and related by persons well-known in the Romish church, that the cardinal Sadolet, when he once travelled incognito through Geneva, wished to see the reformer Calvin, who had written against him. He accordingly went out, intending to knock at the door himself; and expecting to find him, like the catholics, in a palace, or at least in a well-furnished house, and surrounded by servants. But he was very much surprised, when, in answer to his inquiries, some one pointed out to him a small tenement, and when, on his knocking, Calvin himself came, very simply clad, to open the door. He was surprised indeed to find that this was the great and celebrated man whose writings he so much admired, nor could he refrain from expressing his astonishment to him. Calvin however begged him to observe that he did not call flesh and blood to his counsels, nor look to enrich himself and to become great in the world, but to glorify God and to defend the truth.

But this unselfishness of Calvin was very much misunderstood by his opponents, and he was obliged to defend himself against their slanders with great earnestness. He said, for example, many years before, in his epistle to Sadolet, that if he had desired riches and honor, he would not have left the catholic church: "I speak not willingly of myself, but as you will not allow me to be silent, I will say what I can without sacrificing modesty. If I had consulted my own interests, I certainly should not have retired from your faction."

To this subject also pertains one of his letters to Piperin, written at a later period. He was assailed on all sides, and accused of amassing wealth. He declared that he would not condescend to confute all these absurd attacks. "But see," he

says, "for example, the great sum of money of which you speak. All know with what moderation I live at home. They see that I incur no expense in the way of dress. My only brother also is not very opulent, and has certainly not gained what he has through my money. Where then can my treasure lie hid? And yet it is reported that I rob the poor. This however the base creatures will find to be a vain attempt at slander, since, when pious men give anything to the poor, not a farthing passes through my hands. About eight years ago a gentleman died in my house, who had deposited a sum of more than 2000 gold dollars with me, and without my giving him a receipt. As soon as I saw he was in danger, I declared, though he wished me to dispose of the money as I thought best, that I would not undertake such a weighty affair. I took care that he sent 800 dollars to Strasburg, to aid the unfortunate refugees in that city. At my earnest request he named responsible persons to dispose of what remained. When he wished to give me a sum, which others would not have despised, I resolutely refused it. But I see what incites my enemies to urge these falsehoods. They measure me according to their own dispositions, believing that I must be heaping up money on all sides, because I enjoy such favorable opportunities for doing so. But assuredly if I have not been able to avoid the reputation of being rich, during my life, death will at last free me from this stain. For the rest, were I to enter upon a formal defence I should never have done; for if much is said here, I know that this is scarcely the hundredth part of that with which I am daily assailed."

Thus also in his preface to the Commentaries on the Psalms, he says, "People circulate ridiculous rumors respecting my treasures, my great power, and my wealthy sort of life. But if a man satisfies himself with such simple fare and such common clothing, and does not require more moderation in the humblest than he himself exercises, how can it be said that he is a spendthrift and fond of self-display? My death will prove what they would not believe in my life."

And so it happened; all his goods and possessions amounting only to about 200 dollars. He derived no profit from any of his books, dedicated though they were to princes and noblemen. The only present he received was a silver goblet, given him by the lord of Varennes, and which he bequeathed to his brother. Even this circumstance, however, that he had a goblet to leave, was made a subject of ridicule and abuse.

Luther also delivered all his college lectures without pay. The booksellers offered him yearly 400 dollars, no small sum for that period, but he was unwilling to accept any gratuity for his writings. His stipend amounted probably to about 540 florins. His sovereign and the Danish princes of that period acted liberally towards him, and gave him, Melancthon and Buggenhagen, little yearly allowances and presents. Mention is made in his will of some debt which was to be liquidated by what he left. Mathesius relates, that "the elector John once sent him a new coat, upon receiving which he wrote back, that too much was done for him; for if he had all his reward here, what should he have to expect in the life to come? John Frederic offered him a share in a mine on the Schneeberg. He refused it, saying, The devil, who is my enemy, pretends that all the kingdoms of the earth are his. Let the adversaries know the German beast cares not for money, and will accept none if it be offered him."

As both men now stand before us, we see the one somewhat severe, the other friendly and social; and as we behold the crowd of enemies and slanderers who have never ceased to represent them on their weakest side, we cannot help recollecting the words of Christ: "John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil: the Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners: but wisdom is justified of her children."\* Of Calvin's industry I shall not speak till we arrive at the examination of his practical writings, in the following part of the work.

When we turn our attention from his domestic life to the observation of his inward being, we discover that the man whom the world still so greatly misapprehends, was endowed by nature with qualities involving many contradictory principles, which the Spirit of God had still the power wonderfully to harmonize and cement.

In his spiritual occupations we find him exhibiting gifts, not often apparent in other men of the same class; for example, an extraordinary memory and an excellent judgment; life in the higher circle of ideas, and at the same time a mind fitted for business. We have already remarked some of the wonderful contrasts in his character; for example, that he manifested and applauded, as a theologian, great caution in investigating divine mysteries; while, on the other hand, he exhibited in many cases

\* Matt. xi. 18, 19. See Bayle's eulogium of Calvin's moderation.

the greatest boldness. On the one side he delighted in theory, and on the other was perpetually seeking its practical development.

But the most remarkable feature in his character was the union of a fervent, zealous, susceptible temper with a habit of tranquil thought, and a clear, penetrating understanding. He indignantly opposed himself to wickedness from his very childhood, and afforded in this another contrast to his modesty, mildness and benevolence.

The divine Spirit, circumstances and faith, as the latter became formed in him, gave a new and startling direction to these opposite endowments. Thus the feeling was perpetually increased, that God had destined him to some great work upon earth,—a feeling not suddenly formed, but gradually developed.

Proceeding thus, from the consideration of his disposition, we may now contemplate the development of his inner life, as it must have appeared to himself when he meditated on his own nature, and the working of grace in his soul. In this respect we must recognize his holy severity as the first fruits of God's spirit. This, his unwonted strictness, indicates where we must look for the fundamental principle of his character, and that is in the spirit of the Old Testament, which with him was all-powerful. Calvin was pre-eminently a conscientious man: neither the understanding nor the feelings predominated in him. This conscientiousness exercised the greatest influence over his whole being, which, endowed with glowing zeal, showed a holy devotedness to whatever is good and right. Hence the character of his religious zeal, which sometimes seems blended with obstinacy, fanaticism and arrogance, exhibits at the same time a noble, unconquerable firmness; a sincere, deep humility; an utter self-abasement, the fruit of an awakening conscience. Thus, as the Holy Spirit apprehended in him not so much the feelings, the imagination, or the understanding, as the conscience, so the purest love of truth exercised the most remarkable influence on his life. This was the highest point in the development of his character, and the profoundest in his nature. The spirit of truth, not of thought, governed him in little things as well as in great, a matter of importance in our judgment both of his inward and outward life. His heroism displayed itself in the season of struggle; his piety, always accompanied by the profound feeling of divine election, in the inward life;



his faith never wavered ; his feeling of the nearness of God never failed.

With regard to his conversation, Beza says, "Earnest and dignified as he was, there has rarely been a man whose discourse and friendly bearing were more agreeable than Calvin's. He bore with wonderful patience the failings of men, arising from their natural infirmity, that he might not, by intemperate severity, grieve or offend the conscience of the weak ; while, at the same time, he was far from sparing, by negligence or flattery, the vices of the wicked. Through his naturally choleric temper, he easily yielded to anger ; and his life, which was one long struggle, had confirmed this failing. He was himself aware of this, and bridled his feelings. In writing to Bucer, who accused him of this great hastiness of temper, he says, "Of all the struggles which I have had against my failings, and these struggles have been many and severe, the greatest has been that against my impatience. My efforts have not been wholly vain ; but still I have not yet been able entirely to tame this wild animal." Beza, his friend, who saw him in the most difficult moments of his life, affords him this rare and noble testimony : "God's Spirit also taught him to moderate his anger, that no word might escape his lips unworthy of a good man. Still less would he allow his anger to prompt him to revenge. It was only when the honor of God was in question, or when he had to contend with the enemies of order and of the church, that the fire streamed over, or that he gave his indignation, as he then did, free course." Calvin's Elias-zeal exhibited itself in close connection with the gentler qualities of his character, especially when, after his return to Geneva, he was engaged in establishing his severe system of discipline. The writings which principally illustrate his vehemence and anger are those against Westphal, Castellio, Balduin and pope Paul III.

We draw from the 'Régistres de la République' of the 9th of July, 1547, an instance of the complaints made against him on account of his passion. It was necessary for Calvin to defend himself, and Farel, who had a good deal of authority in Geneva, was obliged to interfere for him. "Calvin," it is said, "having censured from the pulpit certain disorders with too much heat, and another minister having said that the youth of Geneva wished to overthrow religion, the council exhorted them to prevent the abuses of which they spoke, and not to proclaim

them in this manner from the pulpit." On the 12th of July, "they replied that their conscience was concerned in the matter, and that to prohibit their preaching thus, would be to deprive them of the liberty of the ministry." He was also rebuked for his unbending firmness. But when people speak of his malice, this is to utter what is false, and to contradict all that we know of his life and being, which seemed created for friendship and to promote the common good of mankind. Outbreaks of passion occurred indeed to the end of his course, and even in his last address to the council he spoke of this, and hoped that God would forgive him this failing. He defended himself against the charge of violence in his work against the Nicomedites, which is written indeed with a peculiar severity and sharpness, strangely in contrast with what he intended to prove.

Morus\* rightly observes, that the most opposite virtues were united in his character. With great zeal and vehemence there was combined a cheerful, even gay disposition, the existence of which is denied by those only who judge him according to the features of his pale face, and not according to his words and works. "However little we may know of his agreeable conversation, and gentle, familiar bearing, we know this, on the report of persons worthy of credit, that he made no difficulty of amusing himself at a game with messieurs our magistrates; but it was the innocent game called *La Clef*, the aim of which consists in pushing a certain number of keys as near as possible from one end to the other of a long table."

It is an error very generally circulated, that Calvin was of a melancholy or surly disposition. Thus, in an article in the 'Biographies Françaises,' he is called *un esprit chagrin*. Bossuet names him *un génie triste*. I must altogether deny the truth of this notion. In the numerous letters which Calvin wrote at various periods of his life, and in the midst of the greatest sufferings, I find only earnestness, anger, and sometimes an indignant zeal—trust in God, and a mild and friendly nature. As all the letters, moreover, written to him, express the most cheerful, child-like confidence, we may properly ask, how people could write in this manner to a man whose ungente, surly character was most likely to offend and disgust them? But thus was it even in the last years of his life, when he was honored by all as their father and patriarch. There was nothing stern,

\* Pp. 115, 116.

formal or repulsive in his manners. Women never shrunk from frequent or familiar conversation with him on subjects of religion. And that which will say still more in his favor, his colleagues in office often spoke, after his death, in terms of the highest praise of his gentleness, and agreeable, loving temper.

Little matters excited his impatience. For example, many people had the unfairness, in order to obtain some specimen of his writing, to question him on subjects which he had already fully explained in his printed works. This sometimes moved him to great anger, which was the more conspicuous, as he was in the habit of admonishing others to exercise forbearance.

The following is a soul-full letter, among many others, addressed to Macaire, about the year 1557, and which shows what elevated, noble feelings inspired his mind for all true believers :—

“My dear, my very beloved brother! If, free from fear and anxiety, I should animate you and your brethren in office to endure the strife which awaits you, my language would rightly be considered cold, and even disagreeable. Distressed however as I am on account of your danger, and trembling as I do while exhorting you to perseverance and trust, this letter, which is a living image of my heart, and shows all its inward emotions, will speak to you no less clearly than I could myself were I present, and a partaker in your troubles. And certainly, if the worst should happen, it would be my wish to be united with you in death rather than to survive you, and have to weep so great a misfortune for the church. But, happen what may, you know enough of the decrees of your heavenly Master, though I should be silent, to prefer death a thousand times to forsaking from fear the post to which He has appointed you. I abhor the infamous charge of sedition with which these wretches vilify not only you, but the Gospel. Happily you have a good conscience, and know that it is hate only which excites these accusations against you. You must, therefore, with a tranquil, equable spirit, supported by the testimony of your innocency, bear these slanders, slanders which even the Son of God himself could not escape. And good is it, that the truth itself, sometimes, rising out of darkness, should confute the wicked falsehoods of your enemies, while you yourselves are silent; since after the noise has been made for a few days, the clamor will cease of itself, and the authors of it will be covered with shame. Though the devil employs all his efforts to overwhelm you with hate and infamy, he can never prevent God from gaining praise for his

name through this marvellous and noble struggle, or hinder the light of his glory from shining out of the darkness. Still, never did the free and open knowledge of the faith reach the ears of the king (Henri II.). If the end correspond to the beginning, as we hope it may, the blood-red lion, believe me, will grow pale a thousand and a thousand times. And though the flock tremble, yet be not afraid, but oppose yourself to the agitation of the church with quietness and resolution. God may, perhaps, restore peace against all expectation. If your patience be put to a harder trial by the counsels of your heavenly Father, yet this stands fast—that he is true, and will not allow you to be tried beyond what you are able to bear.”

We see how high a character he must have enjoyed, ready as he thus was to exhort to martyrdom, while he himself was at a distance, and not exposed to the danger.

In proof of his sympathizing, loving disposition, we might adduce another letter, written to the lady de Cauny on the death of the lady de Normandy. It shows also in what a friendly way he interested himself in the care of souls, and we may regard it as a proper accompaniment to the letter addressed to Richeburg on the death of his son. His praise of the good is equally worthy of observation.

The world has been accustomed to impute a stoic coldness and severity to his character, but the whole tenor of his life contradicts this imputation. That deep feeling for, and knowledge of, the sufferings of others, which he derived from his own experience, and which was not dulled even in his old age, are exemplified by a variety of instances in his letter to Knox on the death of his wife. Passages occur even in the ‘Institutes’ which prove his gentleness of spirit, his sympathy with mankind and knowledge of the human heart. Among others is that in the third book, c. 19, in which he exclaims, “May God be content with the imperfect service of his children!” The letters to Jacques de Bourgogne, seigneur de Fallais, an old nobleman descended from the dukes of Burgundy, may also be adduced in proof of what we have said. Interesting on account of the form in which they appear, they are written in a pleasant flowing French style, but the antique character of which has been in some degree injured by the editor:\* their prevailing tone is that of an agreeable conversation, mild and polite, and altogether free from rudeness or passion. We may easily discover in them

\* Amsterdam, 1744.



the polished man, who knew well how to converse with the great; how to treat them with tenderness; and to convert every subject, even to the minutest detail, into a source of practical instruction. At some later period however he and the seigneur were altogether alienated from each other on account of some dispute on a point of faith.

It appears from all these testimonies that Calvin was distinguished for his cheerful, but, at the same time, refined and prudent style of discourse. Luther was distinguished for the same excellence, but did not always<sup>\*</sup>restrain himself from a ruder mode of expression. Calvin occasionally indulged in this style of speaking, and even in the pulpit, but rarely. Some coarse sayings of his have been preserved, and, as it were, stereotyped by his enemies.

No mention is made in regard to Calvin of the loud, frolic laugh, heard in the company of Luther; he had however earnestly considered the subject of public recreations and amusements at Geneva, and with no little forbearance, for he allowed, though unwillingly and with trouble, the performance of a play, giving thereby much displeasure to others. This occurrence took place in the year 1546. Theatrical representations were forbidden by the rules of discipline; the only exception being in the case of a gymnasium, performing a play as a scholastic exercise.

That Calvin allowed himself to indulge in society at Strasburg, appears from the letter to Farel, in which, as we have seen, he says so much of his having been out later than eight in the evening. No other instance occurs of this free life of Calvin. Beza even says that for many years he took only one meal a day, and then only a very sparing one, alleging as a reason the weakness of his stomach.

Calvin suffered much from bodily sickness at Strasburg: this had been brought on by his incredible activity, and the exhaustion attending his zealous labors. But these sufferings, which greatly increased in later years, and without moderating his efforts, proved a source of great instruction to him. The truth of this is sufficiently evidenced by the following letters. In the first we see how much pleasure he took in relating little circumstances.

Thus, writing to Farel, he says, "I answer you somewhat late, because, at the time when your letter reached me, weakness prevented my moving my finger. From that day to this,

I have been in such an uncertain state of mind, that I could write to you nothing positive. That my marriage might not afford too much delight, the Lord has modified our joy, and limited it, so as to prevent its passing the proper bounds. On the 3d of September I suffered very grievously from a headache, but I had been so used to the pain that it was not much to be regarded. The following Lord's day, when I had become rather heated in the afternoon's discourse, I felt the rheumatism in the head somewhat decreased. Before I went away a catarrh had seized me, and I suffered a constant inconvenience from this attack till Tuesday. Having to preach on this day, according to custom, and to struggle with the greatest difficulty, for I could scarcely draw my breath, and was dreadfully hoarse, I felt for once inwardly shaken. The catarrh continued most unseasonably, for I was not yet free from my headache. Something too happened on the Monday to excite my gall. My housekeeper, as it often happens, spoke more freely than was proper, and said something to my brother which he could not patiently bear. He did not express his indignation, but leaving the house very quietly, swore that he would not return so long as this woman remained with me. When she saw that I was very distressed at the absence of my brother, she went away, and her son came and continued with me. But when excited by passion, or any other violent emotion, I generally forget myself if I be eating, and swallow my food with rather more haste than necessary. It happened so in the present case. Thus, as I had overburdened my stomach in the evening, and with improper food, I was troubled the next morning with an incredible fit of indigestion. It was in my power to remedy the evil by fasting, and this is my usual practice; but to prevent my servant's son from supposing that this was a cunning invention to give him a dismissal, I sacrificed my health in order to avoid inflicting this pain. On Tuesday, therefore, when the cold began to leave me, I was seized about nine in the evening with a fainting fit. I went to bed, a hard struggle followed, a strong fever, and an extraordinary dizziness. On Wednesday, when I got up, I was so weak in all my limbs that I was compelled to acknowledge I was ill. I ate very little; I fainted twice during the meal. This occurred after many paroxysms; but the latter were so irregular that it was impossible to determine from them the nature of the fever. The perspiration was so great that the mattress on which I lay was almost wet through. Your letter

arrived while I was thus amused. So little was I able to do what you wished,\* that I could scarcely set three steps. To conclude: the sickness may have been this or that, but it ended in a tertian fever, attended at first with violent symptoms, but with milder after the third day. I had some relapses, but they did not greatly affect me. When I began to recover, the time for visiting you was over, nor had I even then sufficient strength to make the journey. This however has not prevented me, though still unwell, from considering in proper time with Bucer and Capito what ought to be done. Even in the midst of my sickness I did not cease to adjure Bucer rather to set out alone than disappoint the hopes which had been encouraged. But though inclined to do what he had promised, he would have liked me to accompany him. The letter also of Grynæus, who urged him to promise, under every circumstance, to come with us, if we were not united, could not induce him to do so. While I was still bowed down by bodily weakness, my wife fell ill of a fever, from which she is now indeed recovering, but only through another evil. But to speak the truth, all this would not have marred our plan, had not a greater hindrance been added to the rest. A report has existed for the last fortnight, and continues to increase, that the emperor is coming to Worms, to be present at the diet: this keeps Bucer back. It is not necessary that I should take much trouble in excusing myself, for I cannot contend with God, who held me chained to my bed, when the time for commencing the journey arrived. So far as my will is concerned, entertain no doubt. Those who were present know well enough that I have often uttered my complaint. Thus Farel's hopes are disappointed. But you and I must both of us exercise patience, it being the will of our common Lord to disappoint or delay the fulfilment of our hopes. Let us believe that He can better foresee what is good for us, than we can discover it by our guesses and surmises.

"We hear nothing new here, except that the king and the emperor rival each other in their rage and disposition to persecute the Christians, and in their devotion to the Romish idol. A short time back a Gascon was here, a person of some distinction as it seemed, for he kept five horses. I wrote through him to the queen, and entreated her in the most earnest manner not to cease to be our protectress in these perilous circumstances. Nothing can be done openly in such unsettled times."

\* Farel wished him to come to him.

Some expressions in the following letter show what were the feelings excited by his personal sufferings.

The letter is addressed to the lady of the admiral Coligni:—  
“Madam, that my letter was sent to you without the name being added, did not arise from my folly or carelessness, but rather from the haste of M. de Beza, who took it from me while I was ill, and put it in the packet without waiting to see if my name or the date were inserted. But you might easily guess from whom it came, for my hand could add little grace to the contents. I will take more care for the future. For the rest, madam, I thank God that he has restored you to convalescence, and that from a sickness which there was reason to fear might prove mortal. However freed from anxiety as to this particular danger, I have never ceased to keep you in my memory, for there is abundant reason why both you and monseigneur the admiral should be honored by all true servants of God; in the number of which I hope to have a place, however unworthy of it I may be. You know, madam, how it becomes us to profit as well by the chastisements as by the mercies, which we receive so opportunely from the hand of our good Father. It is certain that all our sickness ought not only to humble us, by making us sensible of our weakness, but should also drive us back upon ourselves, and compel us to acknowledge that, poor as we are, our only refuge is in his mercy. And there are some which ought to serve as medicines, to purge our affections for the world, and to take from us that which is superfluous: and some are messages of death to us, intended to teach us to be prepared to remove whenever it shall please God. But still He makes us continually sensible of his goodness and of his frequent deliverances. It remains that you conclude with St. Paul, however often we have been delivered from death by his hand, He will still continue to deliver us. Take so much the more courage, therefore, in devoting yourself to his service, knowing as you do that it was for this that he has preserved you. I am very rejoiced to find that monseigneur the admiral proposes to go the first day that it is possible. May the journey prove very advantageous, and in various ways, as we pray God that he may render it prosperous; and commending ourselves humbly to your good grace, I will entreat our God and Father to grant you his constant protection, to enrich you with his spiritual gifts, and evermore to guide you, that his name may be glorified in you.”

Geneva, August 5, 1563.



That force of character which showed itself even in his childhood, continued to distinguish Calvin throughout his life. This quality occasionally degenerated into harshness, or a certain degree of severity or sourness of disposition, but rarely seen in the tame, unmarked characters of the present day. In Calvin it developed itself, united with a strong sense of duty, arising from his conscientious feeling, and formed, at last, supported as it was by great energy and thoughtfulness, that which the Genevese council named, after his death, *the majesty of his character*. The world has formed an altogether false judgment of the force of his character, because it has failed to consider from what a noble fountain it sprung, and how far it arose from outward circumstances. We are not intending to write an apology for Calvin, but it is due to justice to remark, that he rightly regarded it as necessary, in those rude times, to oppose the obstinacy of his enemies, by a bold unflinching earnestness. His keen understanding would probably, in the present age, have adopted a very different rule to that which he established by his influence in Geneva. The moral power of his character was indeed so great, that he would leave no vice unpunished. He desired the severe justice of the law to take its course, without regard to persons. Thus a lady, related to him, was condemned by his advice to suffer a public punishment, because she had been detected in some improper proceeding. His character and judgment were as a moral rule for Geneva and the whole church.

In order to form a right estimate of the man, we must be careful not to forget that he who was the defender of a new theocracy, was moved rather by the spirit of the old prophets than by the mild apostolic spirit. This must be allowed, although he frequently seems to unite both in himself; and, which should not be overlooked, to pass from one to the other. His whole life is an illustration of this fact. As a passing evidence of the truth of the remark, we may appeal, among others, to a letter which he wrote to the duchess of Ferrara: it shows how closely blended the two dispositions in him were; and how he spoke of severity, more powerful in him than love, as a duty. Hatred to enemies is expressed in this letter as it is in some of the psalms of David. Another characteristic letter, in the same tone, is that on the death of the duke of Guise, the enemy of the protestants, whose death he desired, but whose intended murder he had prevented. It shows what Calvin thought on praying for enemies; on the murder of princes, even though

the adversaries of the church ; and on an untimely, hasty judgment.

“ You have not been alone in your sad and bitter reflections on the horrible troubles which have occurred. True it is that you are likely to feel the misery more acutely than others, the crown to which you are so nearly allied being in such confusion. But still the calamity is common to all the children of God ; and in so far as we can say all, so much the worse for him who is the author of the scandal. There is reason indeed to weep and lament, and so also that a good cause has been badly conducted. Now, if the evil affected all good people, monsieur de Guise could not be spared. And for my own part, as I have always prayed God to have mercy upon him, so too have I often desired that God would lay his hand upon him to deliver his church, if it was not his will to convert him. Yet am I able solemnly to protest, that just before the war, it belonged to me only to keep back, by my exhortations, those active and determined men who were resolved on exterminating him from the earth. But to condemn him thus is to proceed too far, unless it were possible to discover some certain and infallible mark of his reprobation : and great caution is necessary here to guard us against presumption and temerity, for there is but one Judge on the tribunal, before whom we shall all have to give account. The second point seems to me still more preposterous, that is, to put the king of Navarre in paradise, and monsieur de Guise in hell ; for if we compare the one with the other, the former was an apostate, and the latter has always been an open enemy to the truth of the Gospel. But yet, madam, I have to pray you not to be offended at this expression—not to pray for a man without having well determined the form and quality of that of which we speak. For however I may pray for the salvation of any one, that is not the same as if I recommended him, in every respect, as if he were a member of the church. We beseech God that he may bring back into the good way those who are on the path of destruction ; but that is not to put them on a level with our brethren, or generally to wish them all prosperity. I will tell you something, madam, respecting the queen of Navarre, very pertinent to this subject. When the king, her husband, had revolted, the minister ceased to mention him in the public prayers. Grieved at this, the queen remonstrated with the preacher, and observed that for the sake of the king's subjects he ought not to pursue this course. But excusing

himself, he pleaded, that he desired, by not speaking of his majesty, to conceal his shame and dishonor, for that he could not pray for him to God without praying for his conversion, which would have been to expose his fall. If he should pray for his prosperity, this, he added, would be to make a profane mockery of prayer. The queen having heard his answer, waited till she had sought the opinion of others in the matter, and, finding that they agreed with the minister, quietly acquiesced in their decision."

Calvin's hatred against the enemies of God, and his Elias-like zeal, which he cherished as a duty, are seen especially in the following letter. The subject referred to concerned the conduct of some clergymen, who, according to the opinion of the duchess, had passed too severe a judgment on the duke of Guise. Calvin undertook their defence, and says:—

"Without depending on the statement of others, I see by your letter that affection has made you forget that which would otherwise have been sufficiently obvious. To that which I have asserted, that David, by his example, instructs us to hate the enemies of God, you reply, that the example belonged only to those times, when, according to the rigor of the law, it was allowed men to hate their enemies. Now, madam, this gloss would serve to overturn all Scripture, and we must therefore avoid it as a deadly pestilence; for we know that David surpassed in goodness the best that could be found in the present day. Thus we hear him protesting that he had mourned and poured forth many tears into his bosom for those who had plotted to take his life; that he had worn sackcloth for them, and had rendered them good for evil. So too we see that he was as tender as it was possible to desire. But in saying that he hated the reprobate with a mortal hatred, there can be no doubt that he was conscious of a zeal which was correct, pure, and properly regulated. To this three things are necessary: namely, that we have no regard to ourselves or our particular interest; that we have sufficient prudence and discretion not to judge too hastily; and, lastly, that we keep ourselves within measure, and do not pass the bounds of our vocation. This, madam, you will see more plainly expressed in many passages of my Commentary on the Psalms, if you will take the trouble to consult it. The Holy Spirit has indeed given us David for a guide, that we should follow his example in this respect. And truly are we told that he is, as to this his ardor, a figure of our Lord Jesus

Christ. Now, woe be to us if we pretend to excel in sweetness and humanity him who is the fountain of pity and mercy. But to cut short all disputes, let us confess that St. Paul applies to all the faithful that passage in which it is said, 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.' Wherefore, our Lord Jesus Christ, when reproving his disciples for desiring that fire might fall from heaven on those who rejected him, as Elias had done, did not allege that they were no longer under the law, but only reminded them that they were not moved by the same sentiment as the prophet. Even St. John, from whom only the word charity has been retained, shows clearly that we ought not, under the pretence of love to mankind, to grow cold as to the duty which we owe to the honor of God and the preservation of his church, for he forbids us even to salute those, whoever they may be, who would turn us from the pure doctrine."

He then proves that the spirit of David was the spirit of the Gospel; and that love was to be found in the Old Testament, as severity was to be found in the New:—

"In a word, madam, I earnestly beseech you not to depend upon this distinction, so likely to deceive you, or to draw your conclusions from the permission of the law to take vengeance, or to demand an eye for an eye. For it was forbidden as much under the law as under the Gospel, seeing that it is commanded to do good to the worst of our enemies. But that which was addressed to the judges, individuals applied to themselves, and it was this abuse which our Lord Jesus Christ would correct. Howsoever it may be, we agree that to be children of God we must conform to his example, endeavoring to do good to those who are not worthy of it, as he makes his sun to shine on the evil and on the good. Thus hatred and Christianity are irreconcilable. Hatred to persons is contrary to the love which we owe them; for this is to wish, and even to promote their welfare; and to nourish, to the best of our ability, peace and concord with all. Now, if those who are charged with the duty of suppressing all enmity and rancor, of reconciling enemies, of exhorting to patience, of repressing all desire of vengeance, are themselves incendiaries, so much the worse, and so much the less chance of excuse."

Calvin seems always to have forgiven, by principle, when the offence was one of a personal character, but never when it concerned the honor of God, or when he saw, or supposed that he saw, an enemy of God.



Senebier rightly observes, that we know too little of Calvin's private life. His friends have supposed that he was sufficiently well known by his public proceedings, and his enemies have employed themselves in blackening his character. One of his adversaries was Troillet, who had been promised the first vacant seat in the council. Calvin opposed himself to his election, because he knew the unfitness of the man: this excited Troillet's bitter hatred, but he repented of it on his death-bed, and desired Calvin to be called. Calvin watched over him, and labored for his salvation to his last breath.

A woman had openly vilified Calvin, and called him a wicked man, on account of his severity. The council ordered her to prison, and wished to punish her; but Calvin was noble enough to obtain her pardon, because the offence was personal to himself.

His bitterest enemy, Ami Perrini, had obliged the senate, by his violent conduct, to deprive him of his place as one of its members. He was also excommunicated; but Calvin used his whole influence to obtain a reversal of the sentence, and he succeeded in getting him restored to his dignity.

In his preface to the Psalms, we see how grieved he was that his enemies would not improve, but would so persevere in their sin that he had at last to lament their ruin.

Altogether different was Calvin's conduct in respect to the counsellor Ameaux, who had accused him of false doctrine, but was afterwards obliged openly, and with all humility, to express his repentance. On this occasion, as on others of a similar kind, Calvin was implacable, because he saw in the enemy of Scripture doctrine an enemy of God. Thus too he was irreconcilably offended with Bourgogne (S. de Falais), formerly his great friend, but whom he would never forgive for having protected Bolsec, who had rashly opposed the doctrine of the Gospel.

Hence the principle of the Old Testament may throw light upon his whole conduct. There was a mingling of the spirit of the old and new covenants when he persecuted the enemies of God; but then, when the Christian spirit prevailed in him, he suffered, as in the case of Servetus, a dark, vague feeling of repentance.

But the great dignity and majesty of his character are especially exhibited in his predominant feeling of the holiness of God, and in his tranquil pursuit of one and the same end through his whole life. To this elevation of character pertained that

dignified conduct which rejected the employment of unworthy means; that moderation, rest and security, which afforded the world so ample an opportunity of learning the decision of his clear and thoughtful judgment.

Still more remarkably is his inner life characterized, and our reverence for him increased, by his stern conscientiousness. All who knew him celebrate his justice and holy simplicity of soul, the power of his conscience surpassing all the other powers of his nature. It was this, and not passion, which so often allowed his zeal to go too far in the pursuit of a particular end. Thus his failings sprung from the excess of his virtues,—failings which he could so much less readily discover, because they easily assumed in his eyes the form of virtue.

Hence the force of his conscience carried him too far in the three distinguishing tendencies of his spirit; that is, in his theological opinions, in his plans of church discipline, and in his desire of unity. He followed out his thoughts on the great mystery of redemption, as far as thought only may go, for so the honor of his God and holy Scripture required. In the same manner he sought to subject man's licentious will to the will of God. Hence too he persecuted heretics, as the enemies of heaven, the murderers of souls, and the destroyers of the church of God. The study of Calvin's character in all these respects cannot but have its use, because his example shows how a man may err in his weakness, even on the side of conscience.

Equally characteristic of Calvin was his conscientious attention to the least, as well as to the greatest, things. In this he was like all men of the loftiest capacity. He was a Frenchman in liveliness, but a German in his correctness and conscientious observance of truth. This was the foundation of his outward practical sense, which was very remarkable as united with so speculative a mind as his.

It cannot be sufficiently repeated, that he reasoned practically even in the development of his stern system of election, which so many misunderstand, while others pervert it into a covering for sin. He ever referred to conscience and the law. The union of these two extremes is perhaps the most wonderful thing in his mind: but the band of union consisted in the pious feeling, in the knowledge of the holiness of God, which condemns all men, so that their deliverance can only be possible through his grace. And this holiness establishes also the moral law,

which makes it the duty of man to perform moral works and to strive against sin.

This indeed does not free him from the objection, that his doctrine, however useful for hearts devoted to the love of truth, is very perilous for weak, ignorant and perverted minds,—an objection, the force of which history, alas ! too clearly proves.

But the conscientiousness which we have above described as the most striking feature of his character, while it led sometimes to obstinacy, and even fanaticism, was at the same time the source of his great moderation, quietness and reflection.

As a proof of his moderation in the sphere of practical duty, we may rightly adduce the fact, that he did not expel those ministers from Geneva of whose hostile dispositions he was so well aware, and to whom his own exile might be attributed, though at the period to which we allude the power to do so was in his own hands. He also showed much moderation in respect to Luther, when he appealed to Bullinger to pardon his impetuosity. This was the case at first even in regard to Joachim Westphal, whom he answered only on his third attack, when this unchristian pastor would not allow the protestants, driven out of England, to land either in Denmark or Germany, and vilified them under the name of Sacramentarians. Calvin's indignation against him sprung only from sound Christian, but still excited, feelings.

Passages sufficiently numerous may be found in his writings against hardness and impatience. In reference to Westphal and his party, who manifested such intolerance against him and the reformers, Calvin expresses himself more severely than in other instances, and shows his need of patience.\*

The controversy with Westphal seems to have exercised a favorable influence on Calvin's character. He had in this case to do with a man of violent passions, who had inflicted an injustice upon him. All the failings peculiar to Calvin were exaggerated, so that the latter had occasion to consider the hatefulness of such defects, and to reflect on the nature of anger and impatience. He repeatedly confessed his failings in this controversy, though not yet overcoming them ; and it is probable that he attained, in this manner, to a higher degree of self-

\* Opusc. p. 1829. "Ainsi donc j'averti que les vrais serviteurs de Dieu ont à se garder à prendre à la volée la défense d'une cause incogneue, ou d'estre transportés de sévérité excessive."

knowledge, confessing as he did upon his death-bed, and with sincere repentance, his too great impetuosity.

He also freely confesses that he was often carried too far, and that against his will, observing, as is worthy of remark, that a man's indiscretion will frequently urge him on in spite of his will. He cannot, as it were, do otherwise: he is driven forward by a tempestuous wind. Partial judges however would not impute to Calvin the failings, to the force of which he apparently yielded against his will. But so little conscious was he, in many cases, of his impetuosity and arrogance, we might almost say his insolence, that he could observe, "It is easy for Master Joachim to object to me, that my language is seasoned with a black salt of vain and tasteless pleasantry, and with the biting asperity of a calumniator. If I ought to be called a slanderer, because I have afforded Master Joachim, so blinded by his vices, a mirror, by the help of which he may at length begin to know his own shame, he must address his complaints to the prophets, to the apostles, and to Christ himself, who did not scruple sharply to reprove the adversaries of holy doctrine, when they were seen to be proud and obstinate.

"We are quite agreed," he adds, "that injurious expressions, and foolish pleasantries, are little becoming of Christians. But since even the prophets did not refrain altogether from the use of reproaches, and Christ employed very sharp expressions in rebuking deceivers and false teachers, and as the Holy Spirit continually assails such persons, crying against them without ceasing, so is it a foolish and thoughtless thing to question whether it be lawful to reprove, sternly, boldly, and with a good heart, those who have justly exposed themselves to blame and infamy."

In comparing Calvin with Luther, who frequently spoke in his own favor with dignity, it is interesting to find the former doing the same thing; the expressions which he employed, considering his position, having a certain degree of elegance and majesty. Thus he says:—"Westphal will never be an orator eloquent enough to make it be believed, that I am a mere babbling, fanciful haranguer; for all the world knows that my writings are characterized by a cautious brevity, and that I invariably keep to the point which I have undertaken to discuss. . . . When I say that I devote myself faithfully to the task of inducing all men to depend upon the mouth of Christ alone, I can produce, as witnesses to the truth of this, not only my books and my



ordinary sermons, but those who see me every day, and who could, were it necessary, afford a still stronger testimony to the correctness of my assertion. And with regard to God, so grandly has he sealed my labors with his benedictions, that were ten Westphals there, the fruit and the profit ought not to seem to them contemptible. Now when I speak in this approving way of my vocation, I do but follow the example of St. Paul.\* When a man can venture to say such things in the face of the world, he must have a good conscience, and be well assured of his own greatness.

A letter written by Calvin, April 13, 1556, to Peter Faber, a young man who placed implicit confidence in him, and whom Calvin warned and encouraged, throws great light on those times when Calvin's bitterness of feeling began to show itself. "Although some," he says, "whose minds have been cultivated by the liberal sciences, may perhaps love me, understand this, that such a hatred has been excited against me in almost the whole world, that many are terrified at the notion of forming a friendship with me."† Such a conviction must indeed have greatly excited him, and explains many circumstances connected with his feelings in the latter years of his life. Surrounded by so many enemies, and so fearfully belied by all the world, we may easily conceive how the mightiest and most thoughtful spirit must sometimes have been forced from its equilibrium.

A justification and a confession may be traced in the following excellent letter, in which he speaks openly of his zeal and his vehemence. The letter is directed to a friend, who had probably blamed him for his severity towards Castellio.

"That we have been so long without writing must be laid to my charge; and I do not deny that I have been purposely silent, in order that I might avoid involving myself in useless strifes; for we are aiming indeed at the same end, but differ in nature and character more than I could wish. I know well what you think, and probably say, of me; nor am I so self-conceited as not to regret the many failings which you find in me; of this I can bring undoubted proof; but still there are other sides of my character which I should not desire to see altered; for we not only naturally differ from each other, but I have knowingly and of set purpose chosen a way for myself altogether opposite to your notions. If mildness be agreeable to you, I say nothing against it; but if I appear too stern in your eyes, I wish you to

\* Op. p. 1799, 1800, 1801.

† Ep. 225.

understand, that necessity has imposed this character upon me. In the mean time, you ought not to forget, how much your too easy complacency injures the church, giving as it does such license to the wicked, and bringing virtue and vice into such close contact that the white cannot be distinguished from the black.

"Whilst that excellent man (Castellio) is making it his object to overturn the surest foundations of faith, he has no feeling of shame in associating with the basest and the most vicious. The God of Calvin is a liar and a hypocrite, double-tongued, the author of all crimes, the enemy of what is right and good, and more wicked than the devil himself. Why should I complain that you act in an unfriendly manner towards me? I know well enough that you have no desire to defend the shameful and vulgar barking of this filthy hound. But I would rather a thousand times that the earth should swallow me up, than that I should fail to hearken to that which the Spirit of God has dictated, and commanded me, by the mouth of the prophets, or that the guilt of casting a stain on the sacred majesty of God should ever fall back upon my own head. And do you accuse me then of passion, because, from regard to truth and faithfulness, I defend a thing which I could not give up without treachery and falsehood? O would that so idle a word, one which makes me blush for you, because it is unworthy of a Christian man, had never fallen from your lips! If there be but a spark of piety in us, so disgraceful an affair must certainly kindle in our hearts the fire of the most violent indignation. As far as I am concerned, I would rather rave than not be angry. You will see how, sooner or later, you must give an account before the tribunal of an almighty Judge. I now utter with far greater right, with a far better assurance and confidence against you, that accusation which two years ago you brought against me, when you said jestingly, in the presence of others, that I was a disciple of Cicero rather than of Christ."

Of the wicked man who deceived him he says, "I exclaim with the prophet, What is lost, let it be lost. 'And are you so tranquil?' you ask. Yes! I am not the less anxious however about his salvation, nor sorrow less at his misery, than if I lulled him to sleep with flattering complacency. Often must you have heard that God hates a cruel pity, and that it is the very plague of the church. I see how severe my letter appears, and I have been ten times on the point of tearing it to pieces. But I could

not persuade myself to conceal what oppressed my soul, and if I did otherwise you would scarcely account me a friend. Consider, moreover, that through the mass of business which I have to perform, I have naturally become a little irritable."

Morus says very properly of him,\* "His holy zeal was a righteous one, and it is our drowsiness only which has provoked his Christian indignation, his tumultuous and stormy feeling of duty. And what remains for the Christian if he will not use the sword? It is not by soft remedies that he could heal the wounds of Zion. He would not have gained his end, and it would have been objected to him, 'If you are not yourself convinced in your whole soul, why do you disturb the existing order of things?'"

Connected with this zeal was that extraordinary firmness, so many examples of which we meet with in his life, and which affords such admirable proofs of the grandeur of his character. By nature shy and timid, the power of God had raised him above the fear of man. His contempt of the world is finely illustrated in his letters to Melancthon, and the queen of Navarre. We quote here one admirable passage, showing his cheerful disposition in his old age, and when he was alone on the field of strife. "It is our duty to fight so much the more valiantly, when we are under the eye of the great Judge of combats, of him who dwelleth in the highest heavens. What! that holy and sacred band of angels, who promise us their favor, will they leave us without strength to drag our limbs to the appointed place? And all that company of holy fathers, will they not help to urge us on? Still more, the church of God which is in this world, and which we know strives with us by prayer, and is encouraged by our example, shall its voice and its sympathy have no weight with us? Let this then be my theatre; with the approbation which it accords me I shall be more than satisfied, though all the world should tear me in the face. But if I never lose my courage, yet must I be jealous of their foolish applauses, and shrink from being perfumed with the glory of a night passed in their gloomy holes." What was still more remarkable in this extraordinary man, the most amiable, the purest humility became reconciled in his character with anger, vehemence, fanaticism, and even arrogance,—with a nature, if one may say so much against him, often sour and too disputatious. Numerous proofs exist that his humility was sincere, that it was a

\* Morus, 119, 21, 22.

work of the Holy Spirit, yea, a fundamental principle in his whole doctrine and life; for his conscience taught him the misery and the condemnation of man, and his heart was impressed thereby with a feeling of the profoundest grief.

The following passage will illustrate our meaning, and show in the clearest manner that, God be praised, he was free from spiritual pride. It is sufficient of itself to convert the rage of his enemies into admiration. A letter of Calvin's writing is found in Crespin's History of the Martyrs: it is addressed to the heroic believers, who had sent him an account of their creed, with the question, whether it was correct, or whether he saw in it aught to alter. He says, "I do not send you such a confession of faith as our good brother inquired of me, for God will render that which He enables you to frame, according to the will of the spirit imparted to you, far more profitable than any which might be suggested to you by others. Even when desired by some of our brethren, who shed their blood for the glory of God, to revise and correct the Confession which they had made, I was very glad to see it, that I might receive edification therefrom; but I would not add or diminish a single word, thinking that any alteration would but have diminished the authority and efficacy, which ought to be attributed to the wisdom and constancy which plainly proceed from the spirit of God."

Every one will feel how greatly this inquiry of the poor Christians, suffering imprisonment for the sake of the Gospel, did honor to Calvin. They considered, that they could look to no greater authority, for the correction of the formulary of their faith to be laid before the judges. How amiable does this great man appear in the fulness of his humility, when he expresses himself only anxious for the truth, and answers with profound simplicity, that he yields himself to the enlightened spirit of the inquirers, and hopes to learn from them. And yet this is the man whom the world accuses of ambition, of pride, and even a papistical love of power,—the man who constructed a system in which thought was pre-eminent over all. We have here indeed an attractive instance of the contrast between the humility of the simple, enduring Christian, and the great teacher, a proof of the deep feeling which Calvin cherished for the authority of the Holy Spirit, and of the subjection and tenderness with which he went to work in the things of belief. When he speaks of his exertions for the church, they are most modestly described in general terms as "a little labor." It was thus he spoke on



his death-bed, though in other respects he was fully aware of the greatness and importance of his work.

Lastly, he calls himself an unworthy servant of God, and in his case such words were not spoken without meaning.

This was indeed a main quality both in Calvin, and in all the reformers; they strove not for a vain honor, but for the honor of God. Had they desired their own elevation, and sought to satisfy a spirit of ambition or love of rule, they would have been no reformers. We have noticed his affection for Melancthon. A similar disposition appears in his intimacy with Farel, whose merits he recognized with humble admiration, as he did Viret's and Beza's. The latter surpassed him in learning and eloquence, and he invited him to Geneva as rector of the new academy, setting him in a higher position than his own, which was only that of a professor.

These are rare examples of magnanimity. The heart in such trifling things can with difficulty conquer its vanity, and keeps open a little door whereby to escape, under pretence of reserving itself for grander sacrifices. Those who best know the human mind, and those who are aware of the influence which ambition exercises on the noblest souls, will best appreciate the value of this praise. If any one is proud of having had friends, let him compare his case with that of this celebrated man. While he never envied others, so neither did he awaken it in any of his associates.

The following remarkable passage occurs in the state register of February 29, 1580, that is sixteen years after his death. It shows what species of influence he exercised, and proves not only the respect entertained for his genius, but that he stood too high to excite the envy of his brethren. They would elect no successor to Calvin in the office of president of the consistory. Thus it is said, "The ministers allege as a reason for suppressing the presidency, that the devil created schisms in the church, by the establishment of different degrees and dignities among the pastors; that his devices, commencing with little things, should be prevented by timely caution; that God had raised up the late Mr. Calvin, a person of great merit, in this church, and had endowed him with numerous and especial graces, so that by the veneration which he had excited, he was seen with pleasure acting as president, though never elected to the office."

## CHAPTER XXI.

CALVIN'S LOVE OF TRUTH, THE FOUNTAIN OF HIS INNER LIFE.—HIS SENSE OF PIETY.—STRUGGLES AND EXTRAORDINARY NATURE OF THE TWO REFORMERS.

CALVIN'S life and conduct would never have awakened such a feeling of respect among his friends, nor left such an impression of the worth and majesty of his character, if that genuine love of truth which God's spirit had given him had not formed the foundation of his character. The deeper we look into his nature, the clearer we perceive that this was the source and the impulse of all his activity, and that even when he erred. It was with him a strong love, a passion, in the same manner as the love of science, the love of the world, or of honor, is with others. His life was not derived from thought or reflection, as has been erroneously supposed, but from the spirit of truth. And as Luther never said to himself that he would undertake a reformation, or formed any plan for such a purpose, but merely followed the impulse of the divine Spirit, without knowing whither, so neither did Calvin ever say to himself that he would establish the reformation, but this its accomplishment arose from his holy devotion to truth. Like Luther's, his inner life was prayer, not reflection. Hence I must protest against the last opinion pronounced upon him in France, in which it is said,\* "The dominant feature in his character was a doctorial despotism, a certain manner of governing by means of the religious ideas which he had cast into society." And of the result of his life : "His reform was wholly a governmental reform."† According to this author, who evidently knows nothing of Calvin's faith, the reformer encouraged the idea that he wished to govern and regulate the world by means of a religious system. True it is, that Calvin established the reformation ; but no sign exists that he formally contrived and planned this as the work of his own head, or as his modern critic would have us believe he did. He had not the faculty for this, but he had infinitely more spirit, more

\* *Répertoire des Connaissances Usuelles* : art. Calvin.

† This notion has become stereotyped, and writers copy it one from another, as formerly the slanders of Bolsec.

conscience and more faith. Hence the necessity to hold fast by this, that whatever he did had its origin in his devout spirit, living and wrestling with God in prayer, in the same manner as his system of belief and struggles for unity may also be attributed to that source. When he persecuted Servetus, it was not from revenge, from wrath, from reasoning, from envy, but from a religious zeal for the truth. This is now little understood. His holy anxiety for the Gospel is described as "a vindictive, persecuting spirit." Against this judgment every reader of his life will, I think, protest. Passion, anger, combined with dialectic power, may be looked for in him, and traces thereof will be continually discovered; but not the least indication will appear, either in his writings or his letters, that he planned his great work by himself or with others, through the processes of formal reflection. Could he, who imparted everything to his friends, have kept concealed for thirty years, in the depths of his soul, the grand idea of his life? On the contrary, we see that everything with him was brought into life by the influence of circumstances, for he desired nothing but truth, and truth necessarily sought the possession of the prize. The subtle critics of Calvin may suggest the idea, that the unchangeableness of his belief was only a mask, and that he would retract nothing in order to secure admiration as a reasoner. But this is an opinion which an understanding, submitting itself to holy Scripture, can hardly conceive or comprehend. It cannot suppose that Providence would send forth a body of extraordinarily organized teachers, who in a time of excitement and revolution should be allowed to exclaim, "Quos ego." Love and inspiration, according to this, would not have been possible for men of powerful understanding; yet we can lovingly embrace the spirit, but never cold and speculating thought.

But every truth-loving Christian must feel even still greater indignation, against the unworthy judgment pronounced upon him in the last history of Geneva. It is one of the latest proofs of the unbridled, licentious manner in which the French people, who live without faith in the church, judge their greatest benefactors. The author acknowledges Calvin's great abilities, in many respects even his pure intentions, his magnanimity, and does not intend to write as his antagonist, but as an impartial historian. Still he takes the side of the libertines, the enemies of Calvin, and judges from their standing-place respecting the great struggle for light and righteousness. He knows nothing

of Calvin's piety and faith, but, animated himself by a pretended liberal spirit, he falsely imputes the same to Calvin. He examines neither his theological writings nor his letters, and concerns himself little about his personal history. Calvin's father, for example, was "Procureur fiscal," but Thourel rhetorically writes, "In the course of this year arrived the son of the cooper of Noyon."

In the second volume he says, "Calvin had a mind as tyrannical as elevated. He appropriated to himself the principles of Zwingli, and set them forth with some modifications. He trusted to his powers of mind, and proposed to establish a system which should bear his name." Now I leave to every reader to form his judgment of these errors. Again, the people are said to have recalled Calvin from Strasburg "only from their admiration of his eloquence." "Thus he found himself in a position a thousand times more favorable to his projects. He often took advantage of it with little generosity." Our author even accuses him of celebrating a species of *auto da fé* for the new faith. "That," he adds, "which ought to have been a reform, became a religion. At Geneva Calvin did for Lutheranism what Luther had done for Catholicism." Whereas it is known that Zwingli and Farel had introduced the more simple worship before the appearance of Calvin, whose views were directed to higher objects. "These labors," continues Thourel, "hastened the progress of reform, by placing in his hands all the lines of spiritual power. Whatever important affair might be brought forward, Calvin was consulted. He was an oracle in every question of dogmatic controversy, and his immense correspondence terminated by centralizing at Geneva whatever pertained to religion. This species of moral dictatorship failed not to render him more active in his vengeance; but he had the cleverness to conceal his despotism under an appearance of austerity and simplicity." Thus our author supposes that he was but acting a play by living so poor and humbly. As a skilful political tyrant, he knew how to gain the confidence of the people; and yet this writer calls him a great man; speaking, however, as it would seem, by a mere rhetorical turn, or according to the every-day practice of calling every egotist a great man who may have the luck to outwit the world. "Thus when Calvin," he continues, "had burnt or beheaded his opponents in theology, and banished his rivals in politics, he retained the supreme power in his own hands." According to this, he must have been one of the vilest



of characters ever described in history ; being tempted, that is, to every species of wickedness, to treachery, murder, and the worst ambition, by the mere dictation of policy. And yet this same writer has greatly exalted him ; the statement that, " Calvin's true glory consisted in giving the seal of republicanism to Geneva," explaining the reason of the compromise.

But the statement referred to is altogether false : Calvin was no politician, and Geneva was republican before his time. What he in reality gave to the little state were the elements of a theocracy, a holy faith, pure morals, and a strict love of order, the very life of political existence.

Another, and a very different, historian of Switzerland, who combines with proofs of the profoundest study, the clearest historical views, passes a far worthier judgment on the reformer. He considers him indeed not from a religious, but from an historical point of view, and even with a predisposition in favor of the Catholic church ; yet he nobly, though not altogether comprehending him, bears testimony to his worth. " John Calvin," he says, " had the spirit of an old lawgiver ; he had a genius and qualities which endowed him on the one side with indisputable excellences, and he had failings which were only those virtues in excess, by which he carried out and completed his work. Like the other reformers, he exhibited an unwearied diligence in the firm pursuit of a single object, an inflexible firmness in principle and duty, and both in his life and death the earnestness and dignity of an old Roman censor. He very greatly promoted the freedom of Geneva, his influence often giving harmony to the otherwise discordant elements of its government. Through his position and discourse, he aided the progress of the human mind far more than he himself supposed. Among the Genevese, and in France, the principles of free discussion, upon which he was obliged at first to depend, and which he afterwards sought in vain to limit, produced much more important consequences than in other nations, less inquisitive than the Genevese, and not so bold as the French. Hence, by degrees, were evolved those philosophical ideas, which, although not sufficiently free from the passions and designs of their authors, were sufficient to banish a mighty host of dark and shameful prejudices, and to open for the future a brighter prospect, the hope of happiness, founded on the genuine wisdom of social life."

In the same manner another distinguished historian, famed for his comprehensive mind and powerful judgment, and who,

like Von Müller, views Calvin in an historical light, thus bears worthy testimony to the greatness of the reformer :\*—"Calvin was not only a profound theologian, but also an able legislator. The part which he took in framing the civil and religious laws, which have been the happiness of Geneva for so many centuries, gives him perhaps a higher title to glory than his theological works; and that republic, celebrated, notwithstanding its smallness, which has united morality to knowledge, riches to simplicity, simplicity to taste, liberty to order, and which has been a nursery for talent and virtue, has well proved how deeply acquainted Calvin was with the nature of man, and the art of government."

We refer again to his love of truth, thus clearly displayed in the sphere of practice. Beza reports of him, that he despised useless rhetorical expressions, and that he was as determined an enemy of hypocrisy and deceit, especially in matters concerning religion, as he was a warm friend of sincerity, simplicity, and childlike purity of soul. Thus, in one of his letters, he says :—"I received you in a manner but little friendly, for I could not practise hypocrisy, which exists not in my soul. Not only did the reasons alluded to make me resolute, but still more the horror which I feel at your insincerity." For the sake of truth, I quote here the only example which I have met with, in the whole of his correspondence, of subterfuge or evasion. He writes ‡ :—"I cannot undertake so long a journey without giving occasion to many reports. This would be the least objection. But what excuse could I make to the senate? I should have been glad to find one, to obtain tranquillity for a few days."

That Calvin, however, did not despise a fair exercise of foresight, is evident from his conduct, and especially from the rules which he gave to the little rising congregations in France, respecting concealment during the existence of the persecution. The following was his advice, not rarely repeated, in the year 1563 :—"Take care to conduct yourselves as cautiously as possible, and give no occasion to the enemies of truth to skirmish with you. You have great need of prudence in this; your main care must be to separate yourselves from all idolatries and pollutions, and then to assemble without noise or display, by companies, to pray to God, and to be instructed by his Word." The

\* F. Ancillon. *Tableau des Révolutions du Système Politique de l'Europe*. 1823. T. ii. p. 72.

† Epis. 301.

‡ MSS. Gen. Mai, 1549.

remark addressed in a letter to some believers in Poictou is well worthy of notice. He authorized a secret assembly there, and says, "There is a fear which forms the mean between temerity and timidity, and which harms not the influence of the Holy Spirit."

Calvin's love of truth, his noble, unselfish struggle for the things of God, amid difficulty and danger, so strengthened his soul, that it became the abode of a courage unfailing and heroic. In the numberless letters which he addressed to persons exposed to the most fearful perils, we see that he had the elevated faith which will not allow a man to elude, by little pretences, the noble death of a martyr. Much should he rejoice, he often says, to see his brethren escape, but he cannot advise them to do the least thing for that purpose. The glorious ruling idea often occurs in the same writings, that the persecuted ought to thank God for the great honor which they enjoy in being allowed to suffer for his sake, and for being called to engage in such a conflict. Hence I observed, at the beginning, that his life was calculated to exalt the spirit, and to encourage the purest piety.

To characterize Calvin's holy disposition in a few words, I will direct attention to one of its most remarkable signs, namely, his child-like trust in God, and his invincible faith in prayer, which was his strength and daily resource. In the perilous circumstances of his life, and in his last hour, he constantly expressed the desire that his friends should pray for him, and for every good thing. Hence the inward conviction which he had, that the providence of God was the guiding power of his whole life. This feeling is expressed with filial tenderness in his preface to the Psalms, and his confession on his death-bed, that he at last saw how the blessing of God had rested upon him during all the storms at Geneva, and though he had gone thither with so great unwillingness. In his last years he became remarkably soft and gentle; he strove to offend no one, and he exhibited an unfailing hope in a better life, which he expressed in short soul-felt prayers.

As Calvin never wavered in doctrine, so neither did he in faith, and thence he had never to endure such terrible conflicts as Luther. He was more temperate, and proceeded at a more moderate pace. Calvin had, it is true, his extraordinary moments, but he stood securer in the second place. Luther, on the other hand, at the head of the mightiest revolution which had happened since the days of the Apostles, had to bear much

severer struggles. This was the consequence, probably, of a certain degree of darkness and high-mindedness, the greatness of the work being almost too much for a poor, weak, human heart. Calvin's darkness, on the contrary, was always dissipated by the first of those with whom he had to contend, and even by the form of his church, which he established to suppress the influence of spiritual pride.

It is interesting to hear Mathesius, who understood Luther's innermost life, speak of these struggles, and to learn from him to judge with caution of extraordinary men, and to treat them with a wiser regard. He relates, "In the year 1530 the doctor's zeal was kindled against his own spiritual children; he intimated that he would preach no more, and he accordingly kept silence for a long time, till his anger began to cool, and the call in his heart roused him again to come forth. Great men have great thoughts, and their own especial conflicts, which we simple ones cannot well understand. Moses broke in his anger the two tables. St. Paul consigned the Corinthian offender to Satan. It has indeed often grieved our doctor that his writings have such a hailstorm kind of sound; and he has many a time wished that he could rain as softly and pleasantly as Philip and Brennius; but the mind works in various modes, and we who journey along the highways or common roads should not look after those who can pass through rivers and woods, and over hill and valley; and far less should we rashly judge men of great earnestness, strength, zeal and courage. They have their leaders and drill-masters in their own hearts. These determine their movements, carrying them forth, whither they know not, and so wonderfully conducting their journey, that he who sees them crosses and blesses himself. When the doctor was once reading of Rebecca, who introduced her younger son Jacob against his father's will, I heard him say these words: Rebecca commenced in a disorderly way, but she brought it to pass; and thus also have I often gone out of the beaten path, and used a strong 'Our Father' for a bridge, and so have come forth with God; I do not however advise any of you to act thus, but rather counsel you to remain on the beaten path, and to labor according to rule; then no one can hedge you round." Mathesius adds, "Therefore let us act according to rule, and as some have overstepped the rule, and yet have fulfilled it, let us admire great and wonderful men, and thank God for their heroic virtue, since we must have stormy wind and hail to send away the old snow."



The simple meaning of Luther's confession is, that he did not always pursue the direct path, and yet he came through ; or that he employed ill means to obtain a good end.

I have found no such original confession in Calvin's writings, although he was like Moses, who broke the tables of the law in wrath ; and like Luther in this respect, that he passed obliquely over the field.

A well-known critic\* says of Calvin, "The ordinary rule by which we measure common men and circumstances is not available in the case of great men, whose course is more eccentric." Calvin however formed a severer judgment upon this subject. He was a simple Christian, and sternly imposed upon himself the same rule by which he desired ordinary men to be judged and guided. Calvin, had not, like Luther, an occasional feeling of unwonted greatness, a feeling which we still find expressed in Luther's testament, and which urged him to extraordinary efforts. Calvin had perhaps the sentiment most proper to the position which he occupied, but may never have supposed that he and Luther would be placed side by side, as they have long since been by the judgment of the church.

Another remarkable confession of Luther, respecting his weakness in the struggles of faith, deserves to be quoted. Mathesius says, "A woman once complained to him that she could not believe any more. 'What!' said the doctor, 'can you no longer believe your creed?' She repeated it with great devotion. 'Now do you hold that for true?' continued the doctor. She answered in the affirmative. 'Well, then, my dear woman,' he exclaimed, 'your faith is stronger than mine, for I am obliged to pray every day for the increase of my faith.' The woman thanked him, and went home happy. Antonius Musa, the clergyman of Rochlitz, told me, that he once earnestly complained to the doctor, that he could not believe sometimes what he preached to others. 'God be praised and thanked,' answered the doctor, 'that it is thus with other people as well as with myself! I thought that it was the case with me only.' Musa never forgot this consolation."

Melancthon often desponded : even Knox, with all his energy, once found himself disheartened. No trace of weakness, on the contrary, can be found in Calvin's faith. His trust was firm as a rock, and this firmness was one of the most striking features of his character. It is not to be supposed however that he knew nothing of such struggles. In the 'Institutes,'† he shows that

\* Bretschneider.

† B. iii. c. ii.

if a Christian is terrified by the dread of God's judgments, he should cast himself into God's own arms. "If the believing soul is driven to and fro in an unusual manner, still will it rise again superior to all its distresses, and never suffer itself to be deprived of its trust in the divine mercy. The soul of the believer, far from being finally cast down, will always rise through its anxieties to a higher degree of security. This is evidenced in the lives of the saints. Even when the judgments of God filled them with terror, they pour their complaints into his bosom, and call upon him, even when they cannot believe that they shall be heard. Faith is never wholly rooted out of the heart of a believer. However shaken he may be, and however wavering, yet does he continue planted in the truth. Although there is no greater despair for them than when they experience the wrath of God, yet will they exclaim with Job, that if God should slay them still would they hope in his power and goodness. Disbelief rules not in them, but only seizes upon them from without. Faith in all their struggles overcometh the world, though it should be assailed a thousand times." Many other extraordinary passages might be quoted from his works, illustrative of the security and strength of believers.

I will here make the following remark for his enemies. Very different from the temper which we see in many of his followers and critics, who hold fast by his ideas, we find in him, on nearer acquaintance, so much spirit or life, that although he keeps sternly to the letter of Scripture, and produces a system which seems to proceed only from the cold understanding, the fulness of his spirit streams brightly over the rough sides of his nature; and, very different again from the dry teachers to whom thought is everything, there is a higher feeling in all he says, and he is better than he seems. He beheld the clearly defined goodness of God, silencing all contradiction, behind the edifice of eternal election, and from which he himself shrunk with awe. Thus, love for the souls of sinners, and great pity, were ultimately combined with his severity in his exercise of church authority, and I verily believe that he regretted, in the later period of his life, the violence of his conduct toward heretics.

The piety which he cherished gave birth to the constant feeling of the nearness of God. He had no especial love of nature; but the whole world and nature were life to him, because he saw God and the angels therein, and as looking down upon him from

thence ; nor is there a single trace in his being of negligence or indifference.

One of his favorite and most characteristic expressions, well proving his faith, and often occurring when he would speak with emphasis, is that in which he appeals to "God and the holy angels, who see us;" as, for example, in his letter to Melancthon, and in a beautiful passage at the beginning of his work against Hesshuss, in which mention is made of the crowd of witnesses who behold us. This thought, that heaven was looking upon him, animated the whole world to his apprehension, and he seems to have always performed his work under the influence of this feeling. It is so much more surprising that he should have used the expression referred to, since he and all the other reformers protested against the invocation of angels and saints ; and hence the angels in our church have been almost forgotten.

Another similar mode of speech is that in which he appeals to Christ as the master of the lists, as the witness and judge, under whose eyes we contend.

We may here take occasion to remark, that the reformers were generally deficient in romantic imaginativeness ; in the love of nature and her beauties. The infidelity of modern times, which frequently loses sight altogether of God's work in the creation, is easily reconciled with a fanatical feeling which springs from the force of fancy, and imagines the existence of a certain spirit, or life in nature. Among the reformers, on the contrary, there is no sign that the lofty scenes of nature inspired them with admiration, as is the case in our times, when an intellectual man, whether he feels the sentiment or not, must at least be supposed to do so. This is even more remarkable in Calvin, who lived amid the sublimest scenes of nature, on the borders of the lovely lake of Geneva, and could not look out of his window without seeing the glaciers of Savoy and Mont Blanc. But if we might judge by his letters, in which he expresses every sentiment of his heart, we should conclude that he lived in a sandy desert in the wilds of Sarmatia, or the tannen-forests of the north. His soul, it seems to me, was wholly employed with God and the invisible world. This so engaged its powers, so stretched the capacity of the spirit, that joy in any outward beauty or glory was compelled to yield. Such men had not time to see, or they did not deem it right to speak of, these things. Discourse employed thereon could lead to no particular end, at least not to the salvation of

the world, and they had no leisure for useless talk. Farel, who was enthusiastic and full of soul, must in all probability, as a man, have been an admirer of nature; and yet when he writes to Calvin, he speaks not once of God's benevolence in creation, of the murmurs of the lake, or the view of the Alps, when glowing with the setting sun,—things which are spoken of so naturally in the letters of other learned men. Calvin never draws his similes from the scenes around him: this defect may also be found in Luther, but in a less degree.

Thus it seems not to have belonged to the development of these great men's powers to delight in outward nature, or even in the works of art. Wessel, for example, as we learn from his biography, and Erasmus, felt nothing of the kind even in Italy.

The same thing is recorded of St. Bernard, who travelled along the lake of Geneva without at all noticing it. How Luther, when the beauties of nature excited him, still held fast by his thought of the kingdom of God, Mathesius shows in the following statement:—"The spring of the year 1540 was very beautiful, everything was green and blooming. The doctor said to Mr. Justus Jonas, if sin and death were away, we might be well satisfied to remain in such a paradise. But it will be far lovelier, when the old world and the old skin are renewed, and an eternal spring arrives, which shall continue forever." Some occasional indications of the love of nature occur in his life, and Mathesius says that, shortly before his death, "he looked for a long time in the evening upon the heavens." Calvin's life exhibits nothing of this kind.

Calvin's heroic resignation, so frequently exhibited, was nevertheless not sufficient to induce him to imitate the sublime sacrifice, the desire to become anathematized for his brethren. That mysterious devotion of the soul which would take upon itself the sufferings of others, and thereby set them free, has no trace, as far as I can find, among the reformers. This resignation is a great trial to the strength of the soul; it is a degree of self-denial which seems to border upon fanaticism. We find one of the most remarkable instances of the anathema in the life of Gichtel, who, according to his own firm belief, freed a soul by his prayers and resignation from condemnation. And we have another in the case of Vincentius von Paul, who liberated a theologian from the evil spirit, which then rested upon Paul himself, and gave him unspeakable distress. This is also illustrated in his history by the case of the young Dufour, who, from ardent



friendship, wished to die for Vincentius, and this actually took place.

As occurrences of this kind are known among protestants as well as catholics, and not merely among their weak members, but among the most pious and godly, they certainly deserve attention. The reformers however were too much employed in controversy to be able to give themselves up to this loftier species of divine life. Nor did Scripture lead them direct to this, and to go further than Scripture led seemed to them sin.

Important, in respect to the individuality of the man, is the view taken of that personal, mysterious being who is the author of evil. This carries us a step higher, and completes our view of Calvin's Christian faith. Luther betrays in this respect the soundest understanding, and power of thought and reflection. He considered that we should not wish to see wonders, for that the Word performs the greatest wonders: thus he says, "I have often prayed God not to let me see a miracle." It is the more remarkable therefore that this man, with so clear an understanding, should so often have seen the devil, and should have spoken of him so confidently, and described him under such various forms. I will say nothing further here on this mysterious subject, except that Calvin, very different from Luther, although he believed with equal confidence in the literal and personal existence of the power of evil, as a fallen being, the enemy and betrayer of mankind, never viewed him as perceptible by the senses. Let it be that his imagination was not so active as Luther's, or that the evil spirit well knew this was not the way to disturb him, certain it is that no trace of his visible manifestation appears in Calvin's life, and that no mention is made of the temptations of the devil especially assailing him.

Calvin's opinions on witchcraft and the influence of Satan, if not less clearly stated than his other notions, are not so frequently expressed. His silence in this respect shows that it was a subject with which he had no wish to meddle. Still he acknowledges the determined influence of the evil spirit on those who make a bad use of their free-will, but not on those who believe in Jesus and redemption.

His silence is the more remarkable, since Picot\* adduces many instances of persons thus affected, and, as it would seem, after Calvin. In the course of sixty years, one hundred and fifty persons are said to have been convicted of witchcraft, and burnt

\* Hist. de Genève, t. ii. p. 389. 1592-1652.

alive, after they had been compelled by dread of the rack, which confused their understanding, to acknowledge crimes which probably they had never attempted, and which at least lie concealed in the greatest mystery and darkness.

How was it that so great and penetrating a mind as Calvin's, which exercised so manifest an influence on the legislature, did not protest against these fearful and turbulent proceedings against witches? Was he convinced of the necessity of these trials? And why, if he believed in such horrors, did he not express himself clearly on the subject? The year 1652 is the last in which the crime occurred at Geneva.

If we consider the labors and writings of this great man in the mass, this matter will shrink into insignificance, and his prudence on such points will lead to the idea, that he adapted himself to the common opinions of his age, and was willing to believe the possibility of a demoniacal possession, and a direct intercourse with the devil, who could impart to the wicked a certain influence and power of magic. But Calvin would not allow of the exorcism of children, which Luther firmly defended. He asserted that, as the elect cannot perish, they cannot give themselves up to Satan, whereas the rest will, sooner or later, certainly fall into his power.

In the 'Institutes,' where he describes the devil as a fallen spirit, and as carrying with him, according to Scripture, a vast number of wicked beings, he says expressly, that the devil, who is always contending against God, can yet do nothing contrary to his will. God allows evil spirits to act upon the reprobate only, and not upon the elect, whose trust is in the Lord. He also further declares, when speaking of the catholic exorcists, that they themselves are under the possession of the devil, thus admitting the possibility of such an influence. His words are: "They do as if they had the power, by laying their hands on the raging and possessed, to improve their state. But they will never convince the devil that they have this power: in the first place, because they have no real influence; and in the second, because the devil has power over themselves; for there is scarcely one in ten of them who is not subject to his sway."

A curious instance of demoniacal possession is related in one of Calvin's letters. A man is said to have given himself to the devil, and his body was afterwards nowhere to be found. Calvin spoke of this to the council, and in a manner which shows plainly that he believed in the power of Satan on the wicked man. The

letter is a very characteristic one, Calvin feeling exceedingly angry that some members of the council smiled at his opinion.

"As you wish," he says, "to be informed more precisely on the matter, you shall be so in few words. Our brother Raymond thought it right to learn somewhat of the horrible death of the wretched man. The thing seemed sufficiently important to call upon the magistrates to institute an inquiry respecting it. I was commissioned by the brethren to appeal to the council. Accordingly, I proved to the assembly the necessity of examining the occurrence till the mystery was cleared up, the reports concerning it having created so much excitement. If the whole was a fable, it would then be officially exposed; but should its truth appear, then assuredly ought not so great a judgment of God to be covered with the veil of forgetfulness. I already saw that many were making a jest of the whole affair. But I remembered, that no miracle had ever been so clearly wrought, but that Satan had sought to involve it in darkness. Men refused to recognize the hand of God even when Dathan, Abiram, and Corah were swallowed up.

"The council resolved to consider the subject, and the inquiry was committed to four syndics, the greater part of the senate, and the prefect of the city, with his officers. We were also present. The man lived on the *Ager Tugurium*, where his wife and four children had died of the plague. He was a wicked, worthless creature, known all his life long as a drunken, dissipated blasphemer. When his neighbors reproached him for so rarely going to church, he was accustomed to answer them jestingly, 'What! have I let myself to Calvin, that I must listen to his preaching?' Warned by Ferronius of the danger attending his evil courses, he showed no signs of repentance. Shortly before his last sickness, he was reproved by Raymond for his shameful desertion of his wife. The plague only excited him to curse. After the death of his children, he himself fell ill. When so weak that he could scarcely lift up his hand, he was seized one night with frenzy. He sprang out of bed, his mother and the woman, who were watching by his side, in vain endeavoring to restrain him. He did nothing but rave against the devil, and cry that he was a lost man and a prey to Satan. On being exhorted to pray, he answered that that could not help him, for that he already belonged to the devil, and that he troubled himself about God no more than about a bit of an old shoe. That these were his words, both his mother and the servant stated.

It was just after sunrise, and about seven o'clock. He was lying on the bed, and his mother sat by on a little door. Suddenly he flung himself over her head, as if borne up by a storm-wind. Both the women strove to restrain him, but he fled with such force that he seemed to be lifted up, and not to run. In the part of the field which he traversed is a very thick quick-set hedge. The spot has been shown us. Even had both sides of the path been level, no one could have had the strength to bound over without leaving some tatters behind; but on the other side is a high wall, and behind the wall a stony road, rough, and almost like the bed of a torrent. A little way beyond is another wall, like the former, and which is also defended by a thick prickly hedge. But while there was no possibility of his springing over the nearest hedge, without breaking all his limbs, and no footing was to be found on the other side, yet did the women see him carried, as by the force of a tempest, high up the weinberg in the distance. They pointed out the spot where he vanished from their sight. His hat was found behind that place, on the banks of the Rhone. Some boatmen, who were sent to look for his body, troubled themselves to no purpose, nor could he have reached the Rhone from that place without falling. But, clear as the matter was, some of the principal men were so rash and petulant as to refuse to give credit to the recital. I exclaimed however with a loud voice, 'If you believe that there is a devil, you have here a manifest instance of his power. Those who believe not in God deserve to be blind in the midst of light.' On the third day therefrom, which was Sunday, I preached on this circumstance to the council of brethren, and pressed hard upon those who treated a thing so clearly proved as a fable. I went indeed so far as to say that, during these two days, I should have preferred death twenty times over, having seen those unfeeling countenances, could I have then witnessed the judgments of God. The ungodliness of our people was more than ever discovered by this affair. Few only agreed with us. I know not if even one really believed us from the heart."

The following letter belongs to the first period of his labors at Strasburg: it is addressed to Pigné.\*

"With regard to sorcerers, I entirely agree with you, that they suffer no change in their bodies; I mean, that they know no other transformation than that which took place in the rods of the magicians, which, although they outwardly took the

\* Oct. 1, 1538. MSS. Gen.



form of serpents, were still named rods by Moses, in order that we might see that these deceivers were rather deluding the eyes of the spectators than working any real wonder. On the other hand, no one can reply, that the serpent actually exhibited by Moses is described by the same word; for there would have been little excellence in the account, if it had been said that the rods were devoured by the serpent. When the prophet therefore sought to exhibit God's power, while he confounded the deceits of Satan, he expressly mentions that the things employed at the beginning were the same, that no one might suppose that he had surpassed the magicians, rather by the instrument which he employed than by the arm of the Lord. If both Moses and the magicians had wrought a similar transformation, he would not have called them rods, but serpents. It is, moreover, not against the truth, that they work such sorceries, for which they are accused by others, and of which they are the conscious doers, according to their own confession. For the kingdom of Satan is covered on all sides with such a thick darkness, that we must not wonder if the deceivers themselves even attain to prophecy. The matter stands thus. To those whose wretched services he employs, that they may befool the vulgar thereby, Satan presents such a net-work of error, that, being altogether blinded, they are prepared for any undertaking. Thus it happens that, inflamed with madness, they sometimes vent their rage not only on children, but even on dumb animals; the devil, who kindles their wrath, giving them strength for the work. Thus, when convicted of such crimes, the question is not whether they actually take another form, or concealed by their ceremonies, only seem to take one; it is more than sufficient, if they surrender themselves with free-will to Satan to fulfil his wicked designs. But it can never be allowed that Satan has the power of creating anything, for there is only one Creator—the Creator of all things. The wonders which he performs, whatever they may seem, can never be more than vain appearances. Although they are often so extraordinary as to pass all belief, we must not forget that it is not so difficult for the father of lies to blind in a certain degree the eyes of the weak, or rather to sport with the blind; it being unbelief alone which can give room to such false displays.

“We may hence understand, what sort of force the charms and barbarous formularies which magicians mutter can have against the faithful. If you do not altogether surrender yourself to the vain delusions of the devil, and allow him to overcome you, all

this will be as a vain smoke. Sorceries are, we may be sure, but empty lies, which certainly cannot avail more than the truth. We speak not of all that is true, but particularly of those promises by which the Lord offers us forgiveness of sins, regeneration, the possession of eternal life, and even Christ himself. But what strength can there be in words spoken without any feeling of their sense, without understanding, and which are heard as they are spoken? Certainly no more than there is in an iron pot or basin when struck to make them ring. Most true is that saying of Augustine, that the power of the Word appears in the sacraments, not because it is spoken, but because it is believed. We should greatly insult the Word of God if we attributed less energy to it than to senseless tricks and absurdities. It is therefore our duty to warn men against committing themselves voluntarily to the abominations of the devil, lest they thereby be made captive. There are however very clear and distinct promises, in which the Lord declares that he has delivered his servants from all these machinations of Satan, and from these his senseless trickeries. If he lays snares for our souls, let the ninety-ninth psalm, which proclaims the everlasting kingdom of the Redeemer, be our guard against every terror. If it be argued that Job was fearfully tormented by Satan, I cannot indeed deny that Satan is a scourge employed by God either to punish or to prove his saints; but a pious heart will understand, that Satan can do him no vital harm, so long as he acknowledges that God's providence ruleth all things, whatever be the instrument it employs."

The following passages, from a letter written a few months before his death, show that he still took the same view of Satan, as a tempter. Thus he writes to the duchess of Ferrara: "It is good that you should be warned of one thing, namely, that the devil has in all times labored to render the ministers of the Gospel contemptible by sinister reports and detractions, so as to make men hate or despise them. It is therefore the duty of the faithful to guard themselves against this fraud: for to become disgusted with the pastures of salvation, is to do more harm than when we mortify the belly, for this is a question of the life of souls. Howsoever then it may be, Madam, if there be those who would fain, by some oblique method, discourage you from pursuing what you have so well begun, you must avoid them as deadly pests. And in fact the devil does raise up such

persons to alienate you, in a secret way, from God, who desires to be confessed among his faithful ones."

In his Harmony of the Gospels he says, "By the word 'possessed,' Scripture understands not all those, without distinction, whom Satan troubles, but those who have fallen under his power, through God's secret punishment, that he may possess their mind and senses. Lunatics are those whose sickness increases or diminishes according to the changes of the moon, as for example, those who are afflicted with the falling sickness."

Lastly, this extraordinary man could not but be either loved or hated: it was impossible to look at his course with indifference. Assuredly it must be allowed, that the man who was capable of such an intimate and tender friendship, and could say, that Melancthon rested his weary head upon his shoulder, and would fain have died so resting, was not the Calvin who has been decried in the world as unworthy of being loved. We will here give a single example, from among many, of the feeling entertained towards him.

Johannes von Spina had been an Augustine. The love of truth took possession of his mind: he expressed his ardent desire for Calvin's acquaintance, in a vehement and glowing outpouring of the heart. "I long cherished, most beloved brother, this desire to make acquaintance with you; and as I sought with the greatest diligence to satisfy this my anxious wish, I asked many persons respecting you, and all expressed, with one accord, their admiration and affection for you, and their sense of the noble endowments with which God has enriched you, and which you have employed for the glory of his church, so that no one comes up to you in spirit or learning and judgment. And they said further, that you are accessible to all whom you see impressed with the love of the Gospel. As I heard all this, and much more, with the same delight with which it was told me, my hope was confirmed that you would readily afford me a share of your friendship. But still the opportunity was wanting. For this I prayed to God with eager and diligent supplications. For many long years He refused, by his secret counsel, to fulfil my hope. But I never ceased to pray; till at length, partly according to his bounty, which He denies to none, and partly on account of my prayers, He granted my wish, and by means of the business which sent me to Italy. I journeyed thither without delay. I burned with desire to see the land which formerly ruled the

world. When nothing further detained me in Italy, and I was preparing to return, I acquainted those who accompanied me on the journey of my resolution to visit you, the wish to accomplish this being no longer to be suppressed. Thus it happened that we made another journey, and that which I had so long desired was accomplished. Mine eyes were fixed upon your countenance as long as my companions would allow. Their society now became bitter and intolerable to me. I was still far from satisfied. In the interview which you granted me, short as it was, you had inspired me, by that mysterious power which seemed to breathe in your discourse and words, with a veneration which could not be surpassed. I am troubled, from hour to hour, with that desire to see you again which arose in my mind as you bade me farewell. And I hope my soul will not rest, till the Lord has united me to you in the bonds of eternal friendship. God grant that this may happen! In the mean time I pray you to write to me, and, as you can easily do, instruct me in all those things which relate to my salvation or my duty. And I further beseech you to remember me in your solemn supplications to God, that He may free our souls from that drowsiness which has deprived us of the resolution and courage, which are so necessary to the true preaching of God's Word. We beseech you again and again to continue the exposition which you have begun of the holy Epistles, for never can there be anything of this kind more profitable for the church. May the Lord Jesus Christ preserve you in health, and free from harm, you, the most faithful of his servants, and of all the most necessary in these wicked times! Farewell in Christ!"

Those praised Calvin the most, and with the greatest animation, who knew him best. I will instance Beza. Among the most enthusiastic of his friends, after his death, we may mention Morus of Geneva. Let us compare with the words of these men what the enemies of Calvin have said against him, especially the shameful and senseless falsehoods of Bolsec, which have been repeated, during three centuries, even up to our own times, in every variety of form. The strongest expressions however ever employed against Calvin are those of Grotius:—"The spirit of antichrist has been seen, not on the banks of the Tiber only, but on those of lake Lemman." For these are the words of a protestant, and proceed from the mouth of Grotius. As an original sign of the hatred which Calvin had awakened, we may also observe, that the canons of his native city, Noyon, as soon as they



learnt that he lay dangerously sick,\* and that he was expected to die, offered up solemn thanksgivings in the church. Thus the blessing and the curse of the world rested upon the head of this man. But we would now look down from a higher stand, and contemplating the church of Christ, which has been animated by his earnest spirit for three hundred years, cherish the hope, that the time is come when the curse itself may be changed into a blessing.

Calvin's sharply defined character was already fully developed, when, in the year 1541, he began his labors with a more perfect feeling of confidence. But it is not till we can look back upon his whole career that we shall be able to form a full and correct judgment of his spirit, according to the rule of the evangelical Christian, who, like Calvin, desires truth, holiness and unity in the church, and the separation of that which is necessary for all times, and for the edification of the body of Christ, from that which lies in the three opposite directions.

\* This was in 1566.

## PART II.



## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.—CALVIN NECESSARY AS A CENTRAL POINT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REFORMATION.\*

WE have not yet considered Calvin in his historical relation to the world. The portion of his life already described was only a preparation for that which followed. We have confined our attention rather to his personal character than to his influence on the church. To make it evident what Calvin was to the world, we shall briefly show how, according to the plan of Providence, he became as a necessary antithesis to Luther in the protestant system, and how the great influence of Calvinism on the world demonstrates this necessity.

Calvin had undertaken the pastoral office in the little, unquiet republic of Geneva with a heavy heart. His energetic spirit however now took a higher stand; he felt the necessity of securing the religious freedom, gained after so long a struggle, by church government and discipline, and so to confirm the reformation. Aided by the example of Zurich, which had established a great unity of opinion in the south, he conceived the plan of a fortress, from which he might successfully assail the various heresies of the age. The time also was near when, after the death of Luther, and the convulsions in the German church, Calvin was to stand alone, to fix the observation of the world upon himself, and to begin his grand and most effectual efforts for France. Thus was this great man, so like in energy to Luther, called to take a part in the second act of this revolution. He was destined to seize and hold fast with an iron hand the car of the reformation, which Luther had set going, but which was now rolling down the hill with dangerous speed. With the force of a stormy wind, and majestically, as endowed with the right of judgment, he cleared the atmosphere of unhealthy vapors, restored peace, as far as it was possible, and often for the comfort of the afflicted let the rainbow glimmer through the clouds.

\* This is the commencement of the second volume of the original work, and forms a new division in Dr. Henry's plan.



Calvin was a necessary contrast to Luther. The latter also wished indeed for unity, and strove with great wisdom against the fanatics, the excited peasantry, the Anabaptists, the Schwenkfeldians, &c. And Calvin strove as energetically as Luther; but Luther aroused, Calvin tranquillized. The watchword of the one was war,—that of the other, order. The one stormed, the other furnished, the citadel of God. Luther, so to speak, uprooted life. The too great excitement thus created would have been injurious to the church, had not others come forward to bridle the spirits by understanding and power, especially in the south, where the reformation was so irregularly developed, and produced a number of dark, subtle minds. It is easy to see how far this was the case, notwithstanding the influence exercised by Calvin. The Socinuses, Ochin, Gentilis, Dudith, Servetus, show it sufficiently well. But the south was tamed, Switzerland delivered, Holland and England raised up, by Calvin's powerful sense of order, and even Germany itself was benefited by its reflex operation.

From this point only can we rightly understand the progressive history of the reformation, and Calvin's importance. There is no ground for regarding Zwinglianism as in antagonism with Lutheranism, because that it was mainly fashioned by principles of reasoning. For Zwingli had not sufficient power in the domain of protestantism to form an opposition, and to work back upon Lutheranism. His system can only be considered as the forerunner of Calvinism, in which likewise there prevails a governing thought. Zwingli's view of the Lord's Supper became in his later years more ardent and profound, and was allowed by the Zurich synod, after his death, to pass into that of Calvin. Thus both churches now exercised a common influence upon that of the Lutherans, and, united with this, nothing remained wanting to show the protestant faith in its perfect opposition to that of the church of Rome.

Calvin, although he sometimes perceived the importance of his position, came forth at this period without knowing how great a work he was about to execute. As an instrument in the hands of God, he only desired to perform his duty. But what a duty! It is but now that we have learnt to estimate its greatness aright; and this gives a still more striking character to his appearance. His mind must have been prepared for this work in another way than that of Luther. Earnest in thought, scientific, methodical, and endowed with the systematic power

of order, possessing no enthusiasm for the outward works of nature, but with ardor enough to plunge into the mysterious depths of the Godhead, thinking clearly on almost every subject, and diffusing around him a genial light; a sublime piety founded on the deep consciousness of guilt; not a trifling, but an earnest, impressive sentiment; a faith supported by the conclusions of the understanding, and a passionate abhorrence of whatever seemed to obscure the glory of the Lord, were the qualities which distinguished Calvin in the office which he was now called upon to fulfil. His commission however was one of peace: he felt himself impelled to endeavor the establishment of a firm reconciliation among all around him; and his anger was only excited when the contending parties would not cultivate peace. Everything serves to prove that he felt it his duty to restrain the petulant, and to keep down with an iron hand the spirit of Antichrist which he saw growing up among the protestants.

If it be asked whether Calvin had the creative mind of Luther, or only the talent to employ what had been already found, I reply, the life of Calvin answers to that of Luther as the focus of one ellipse to the other; or, the one sets the pendulum of the new life in motion, the other sends it back, and thence the whole work is carried forward. The one man had as much original force as the other. Calvin thoroughly considered the reformation, promoted it according to his own principles, and was as creative as Luther, but his activity was not attended with the same renown. He was the second in the field, and his spiritual energy is less easily understood. We may indeed assert, that he not only formed that contrast to Luther which the latter could not find in Zwingli's spirit, but also that, after Luther, his appearance in France at this time was necessary. In Germany his labors would not have been blessed. He was raised to become the reformer of the south. It has occurred to me, in considering the peculiarities of these two men, that Calvin might have been regarded as better adapted to Germany, and Luther to France. But as far as the world is concerned, what a wonderfully different turn would have been given to the whole affair? It would not however have been a happy one. The formation of the two people would have been altogether changed; another history would have been presented to our observation, but no reformation. We should have had to read only of a popular convulsion, followed by irregular and partial changes. It is highly probable that Luther would have atoned for his rashness

at the stake; that France would suddenly have become protestant, and as quickly have relapsed. There was something indeed in his personal character very attractive to the French, and especially to the king, on whose conversion to the new doctrines, that of the court and of the nation itself obviously depended. His bold, chivalrous nature, his vehement bearing, the richness of his imagination, his haughtiness, and even his outward appearance, so fitted for his work, would have created in France the most powerful impression in his favor. His mental character was, it is true, simply German; but the French people, as their old language in its profound harmony well proves, had not then become strange to this spirit. Still the nation would never have been permanently converted through any vain enthusiasm for shining personal qualities.

Calvin, on the other hand, of a thoughtful, practical disposition, impressed with the purest love of duty, and always reducing his ideas and plans to practice, would have experienced in Germany great contradiction to his understanding, learning and solidity. His failings might probably have been forgiven. The main feature in his character, as we have often remarked, was truthfulness even in the least matter. Thence his strictness, and his prudent thought, so very much opposed to the French mind, as it was then already beginning to be formed. And thence the fact, that his own country-people, even to the present day, but badly understand him; while the Germans feel so much admiration and respect for his merits. Then his humble mode of living, which renders him so worthy of love in our eyes, is altogether without interest to the French. Luther's lively, frolic humor, on the contrary; his love of jesting, his taste, not disinclined to social pleasures, were altogether adapted to the south. Bossuet himself, who angrily condemns him, seems to have imbibed, in spite of his judgment, a sort of admiration and friendship for him, which every now and then gleam forth. The stern Calvin would, again, have prospered in Germany as a mighty judge of morals: he would have made the Saxons feel the yoke of discipline, and would probably have established, in spite of all difficulties, the free presbyterian constitution, which Luther rejected, and which would, there is little doubt, have soon been dissolved, like that which Philip of Hesse in vain endeavored to introduce into his states.

Thus both Calvin and Luther would probably have been admired, for their personal qualities, by the foreign people; but

they would never have become the reformers of their land. Hence the ruling wisdom of the Lord found it good to send the fervent, active man to the earnest, quiet, inquiring people, giving him the feeling of an inner life; and the thinking, morally influential reformer, as a check to the light, cheerful, volatile people of the south. And the secret judgment of God might be here at work. It might be ordained that salvation should proceed from Germany; that from Germany the papal power should receive its chastisement, for all the evil which it had brought upon the land and the empire; that France, on the other hand, should suffer heavy punishment for its persecution of the faith; and, because it cast away the restraints of Calvinism, should descend, step by step, from unbelief to the lowest moral degradation, till, every righteous principle being sacrificed, it should see its bright lilies, drunk with blood, fade away, and only recover its proper spirit and its greatness when it should learn to love this, so little understood, but holy, and God-sent doctrine.

If we turn from this unhappy country, and look to Switzerland, Geneva will appear as the proper scene of Calvin's efforts. Here the rude licentiousness and antichristian disposition of the age were more than anywhere prevalent. The little state, without the infusion of some true heroic principle, must soon have been dissolved, and have fallen a prey to the neighboring powers of Bern, Savoy or France. It may thank the force and activity of the council, inspired by a new religious life, for its very existence. And this council was in great part composed of men from the adjoining lands, and who knew how to honor the principles and foresight of the reformer. The old Genevese might be excellent champions on the side of freedom, but they were too volatile to protect or preserve it. But when the little republic became the centre of a religious revolution, it drew upon it the observation of the great, who willingly afforded it defence against its dangerous neighbors. To this may be added, the excellent and peculiar situation of Geneva as the capital of the reformation. Placed as it was on the borders of Italy, France and Switzerland, it is easy to see in how important a manner the appearance of Calvin in this little state was connected with the great historical events of the world.

The secret necessity of his mission, at this period, arises immediately from the mighty influence of his doctrine. The world expected the operation of such a mind as his; and thence the



rapid diffusion and the easy victory of his system. It was for Calvin to perfect the work begun by Luther and Zwingli, to establish a more spiritual understanding of the Lord's Supper, and, by a further development of protestant Augustinism, effectually to oppose the half-Pelagian Christianity of the world. Mankind needed to be roused on this side, the opposite doctrine having already taken too deep a root. Calvin felt himself, as it were, instinctively impelled to uphold his principles against all opposition, and often without seeing the practical use of his proceedings. He offended many, and, keeping the bow as he did at full stretch, had always a difficult problem to solve. The Lutheran and Zwinglian Augustinism was long not sufficiently powerful to break the catholic power of the deeply-rooted errors of Pelagianism. The *Formula Concordiæ* shows how Germany, soon after Luther's death, smoothed away the rugged points of protestantism. This, its original roughness, was necessary; it was a blessing to the world. And although in its original power, and at its first appearance, many exaggerations were displayed, yet it must not be forgotten, that a new and original force will always be accompanied with somewhat of violence in its exercise, if its influence is to extend to distant times; and that the human spirit can rarely at the onset preserve the right measure. With all its faults, indeed, we may discover the actual influence of Calvinism on the civilization of Europe; at one time, through the exaltation of believing souls, and the scientific elements of the system, which were continually acquiring a wider range; and at another, through the practical effects by which it was attended, the sound eloquence, the careful criticism and study of language. Calvin's exegetical method, founded upon philosophical and scientific knowledge, startled France and Geneva: it awakened the spirit of reflection. From this thoughtfulness flowed in later times, unforeseen even by Calvin himself, that light, that clear intelligence, that spirit of inquiry, which the cultivation of modern times encouraged, and which banished numerous errors and abuses, shared even by the reformer. We may, alas! ascribe the excessive love of philosophizing, prevalent in later times, to the habit of inquiry inspired by Calvin.

But it was not on France or Switzerland only that he exercised this influence: it extended to Holland, England, and Scotland, where Knox displayed the true courage of a reformer; and even to Germany, where it appeared to many as a benignant,

salutary spirit, the support and comfort of needy souls. The weaker spirit of Zwingli, the vacillating voice of a Cranmer, and others, were overpowered by that of Calvin; and the various churches which sprung from Calvinism, and flourished under the title of *reformed*, prove by their spirit, their defects and their piety, of whose mind they were the offspring.

That which secured to this spirit so marked a victory, and so comprehensive an authority, was the power with which it propounded and supported by argument, the grandest principles of Christian doctrine. It referred all to these, and thereby impressed upon the soul the sublimest notion of the living God and of eternal salvation. To be elected by God, or eternally reprobated, is so solemn a consideration, that it harrows the conscience, and allows no one to remain in indifference. The world needed the powerful working of this element, though it directly opposed the common and ruling principles of the age, and the prevailing notions of the godhead, darkened by scholasticism and vain imaginations. Many were the souls which thirsted after it, and gladly seized upon a doctrine which seemed to them to come from God.

We may discover, even to the present times, the working of this powerful Calvinistic spirit, grounded upon conviction and producing conviction in the striking manifestations of Methodism, diffusing the severest doctrines of Calvinism. It may still rise again in fierce conflict against protestant principles, and bring with it an overwhelming power, because it announces the mightiest of doctrines, the profoundest principle of salvation, with a force which astounds unbelief itself. And with this fundamental doctrine are united, not only the excellences, but all the failings and errors of Calvinism,—its intolerance and its wrath against those who would not adopt, with the clearly demonstrated doctrine itself, all its adjuncts and consequences,—the culpable extravagances of those who wished to introduce, by means of predestination, the belief in a fate, according to which everything that happens is good, simply because it does happen. It is curious to find, throughout the history of the reformed churches, the Calvinistic spirit in all its phases; and to meet continually with traces of the man, whom we learnt to know in Strasburg, in Geneva, and in his works.

The results of the most powerful operations of Calvin's mind were exhibited in France. It was in that country they were most needed; and we see the fairest side of his character dis-

played in the sublime records of its reformed church. His profound and lively piety, his life of faith, his conscientiousness and truth, combined with an enlightened and scientific mind, introducing an epoch of nobler instruction for the country, and thence working upon all Europe,—his sincere devotion to the Gospel, his pure, free, apostolic sentiments, his genuine, spiritual, and theocratic direction of the synod and its constitution, his habits of discipline, free from oppression,—all these, the noble peculiarities of his character, were thus clearly and distinctly displayed. We are made acquainted, at the same time, with the most remarkable men who shone in Geneva, and created that seminary of sound learning to which scholars thronged from all parts of Europe. A high-school of theology was formed in France: great minds threw a new lustre on the academies of Sedan, Saumur, and Montauban. Who can refuse to honor them? Learned men arose, as Moses Amyraut, Samuel Bochart preacher at Caen, Louis Chapelle professor of the oriental languages at Saumur, Mornay, Blondel, Salmasius, Du Moulin, D'Aillé, Camero professor at Sedan, Saumur and Montauban, Maresius, La Placette, Saurin, and controversialists, as Claude, Jurieu, and the church historian Jacob Basnage.

Nor was it by a scientific instruction only that this good spirit obtained its influence; it gained a still deeper root by its moral teaching. Scientific improvement was always a secondary consideration with Calvin; so was it also with the reformed church. With both, Christian knowledge was the first object, and through their pure spirit it has wrought upon humanity at large, and especially in Europe.

It is remarkable indeed that the church, which threatened, by the doctrine of predestination, to trample morality under foot, in opposition to Lutheranism, should give a far higher stand to practical moral instruction, and produce a large number of celebrated moralists, who reduced their principles to a system; as, Lambertus Daneus, Pictet, M. Amyraut, and La Placette. The Lutherans, on the other hand, often suppressed the attempt to introduce practical instruction, as a species of heretical pietism. Ample proofs of this are afforded in the lives of Arndt, Scriver, and Spener.

In explanation of this phenomenon, we may adduce the evidently practical disposition of Calvin himself, who, the deeper he looked into the incomprehensibleness of human liberty, by so much the

more earnestly called upon man to act. The reformed churches in England, in the Netherlands and in Germany, manifested a similar desire to cultivate practical morality.

The history of Holland further shows us the victory of the Calvinistic doctrine, and the thirst of souls after its spiritual influence. At first the mild opinions of Melancthon on the subject of election prevailed in that country; but the clergy soon required of the states that those of Calvin should be adopted. The controversy between Arminius and Gomarus afforded an example for all times, and the struggle between a belief softened by the natural feeling of freedom, and the stern, cutting, loftily conceived principles of Augustine, then so necessary to the world. Two political parties were soon founded. The people upheld religion with freedom; and consequently both systems, as in Geneva, were arbitrarily bound together. Indeed some political elements have always been mixed up with the pure Calvinistic element. The theocratic spirit of Calvin necessarily blended religion with the state; it required its assistance for the government of the church; and thus, even in France, the protestant church, though far from pleasing to Calvin, soon became a political party. In Holland, prince Maurice usurped, in the midst of the troubles, a large share of power in church affairs; he assembled a synod, persecuted the Arminians,—among them, Grotius and Nytenbogaert; and at the famous synod of Dort the Calvinistic doctrines, completely victorious, were established by a solemn decree. The Huguenots in France felt themselves compelled to yield to this decision, and the liberal-minded Grotius, who was then at Charenton, suffered banishment by a sentence of the church.

In the remarkable history of England, interwoven as it is with sufferings and with crimes, we see the strong, lofty, but dangerous influence of Calvinism; which, while rightly understood, gives peace and order to the world; but which, in its perverted forms, is attended by the dissolution of all principles whatsoever. Under Elizabeth a milder doctrine prevailed in England, and was supported in the episcopal church with no slight degree of intolerance against the presbyterians. In Scotland however the Calvinistic system struggled successfully for its existence, and made religion a matter of party strife. Liberal politics became mixed up with presbyterianism, and the synodal form of church government diffused freer ideas, in opposition to the influence of episcopacy. When James I. and



Charles I. imprudently allowed themselves to make attacks on the rights of the presbyterian church, skilful revolutionists were well acquainted with the art of leading the people, under the pretence of zeal for their religion, to the most horrible excesses. Thus the murder of Charles I. was regarded as an act proceeding from God, and as morally good, because God allowed it, and therefore, it was argued, willed it. Even Cromwell, who upon his death-bed comforted himself with the fancy that he was one of the predestinate, and expelled hypocrisy by hypocrisy, shows by his own painful example, what a devilish misuse may be made of so pure a doctrine. But if, on the one side, the exclusive view of the doctrine of eternal election leads many to such fearful absurdities, as formerly the contemplation of the starry heavens gave birth to astrology; so, on the other side, when the storm was spent, the Calvinistic system in Scotland remained victorious in its holiness; and, deeply planted among the people by wise and prudent teachers, it has continued to bestow upon them the greatest and surest blessings.

But we see the divine influence of that pure spirit more in Germany than in any other country. It did not triumph here through the medium of speculation or through fanaticism; but when Lutheranism, in its old form, was dead, it acted upon it with a quickening power, and, by the instruction and the practical character which appeared in the schools of Calixtus and Melancthon, gave it a new life. It must be allowed, indeed, that the then position of the two churches was useful to both: it was that of the steel upon the grindstone. But it is a fact worthy of remark, and it may be taken as a noble instance of Calvin's peaceable disposition, that the best efforts in favor of union proceeded from the reformed church.

In England, as has been observed, the Calvinistic spirit was awakened a hundred years before Wesley began his great work in that country. Wesley might be called the restorer of the Calvinistic edifice, because he did, for the revival of the church, what Calvin in his time and under his circumstances could not yet do. Putting polemics aside, he directed the whole of his attention to the doctrine of redemption through belief in the Saviour, and to the duty of seeking the conversion of the heathen,—the latter a subject on which the reformers could not think. Adopting the idea of presbyterianism from a higher point of view, he established lay-priests, who, traversing the country in its length and breadth, imparted a wondrous strength

and life to the torpid faith of the wretched people. Though adopting the other parts of the Calvinistic system, he rejected the doctrine of predestination. Whitfield however, his fellow-laborer, received it in all its extent, and planted it victoriously among the existing methodist churches, from which have proceeded the missions, so rich in blessed effects, and the first establishment of Bible-societies. Thus the methodist community formed the peculiarly and positively living side of the reformed church; as, almost at the same time, it happened in regard to the Lutheran church, through the institution of the Hernhutters; and the life which the church now enjoys flows from this source.

We look in our own time upon the new church, which is now rising out of the ruins of the old edifice. The opposition in protestantism has ceased; the churches are united; the more spiritual view of the Lord's Supper has generally conquered: the reformed have, on the other hand, given up the rougher parts of the doctrine of predestination: both churches have banished the spirit of intolerance.

From the elevation thus attained, we look back upon the cradle of this power, and it is more than ever our duty to listen to the reformer. As Calvin has exercised so mighty an influence for the last three hundred years, so is he still the man who gives life to the age, and by the clearness of his reasonings, by his firm and clear spirit, is restoring us in some measure to order. And we say to the youth of our times, excited by the storms of contending principles, and at a period when so many antichristian movements heap contempt on truth and morality, "See! here stands that iron man, who never knew throughout his life what doubt was, and who subjected himself like a child to the authority of the holy Scriptures."

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## CHAPTER II.

### CALVIN'S FIRST ARRIVAL AT GENEVA.

BERN, since the victory of the synod of Lausanne, had exercised a marked influence in Geneva. The citizens, fearing that the Bernese might at length acquire the same power as the dukes

of Savoy, soon formed political unions in opposition to the former, and the necessity began to be felt and acknowledged of recalling the banished preachers. The party opposed to Calvin was bridled. His two letters to the Genevese, and his answer to Sadolet, had awakened the strongest feeling in his favor. Animated by a pure apostolic zeal, his words to Sadolet were, that "he could not cease to love his people as his own soul,—Geneva, which God had entrusted to him, and towards which he must continue to act with truth and faithfulness." Viret, who had been invited to Geneva, had promoted Calvin's work, but Christian earnestness was still wanting. We see from the state-protocol how frolic the dispositions of the people were, how gay their mode of life; songs, dances, and masquerades employing their chief attention, and exciting the severe reproofs of the council. Thus the lady of the senator Perrin, whose love of dancing afterwards gave the reformer so much trouble, was, before her conversion, punished according to the rules of discipline established at the reformation, on account of her dancing.

The little state was agitated throughout by the expectation of Calvin's arrival. Some notices show how friendly the council received him. A herald was sent on horseback to his residence at Strasburg. It was also determined that his wife, together with his furniture, should be brought to Geneva at the public expense. A proper attendant was therefore provided for her, with three horses, a supply of money, and whatever else might be necessary for the journey. A house well-fitted up was prepared to receive him, and eight dollars were given to buy cloth *pour la robe de Maître Calvin, ministre évangélique*. The pulpit in St. Peter's church was also conveniently fitted up, before his arrival, for the sermon: it was fixed to a large, broad pillar, and not high, so that the preacher was near the people.

We seem to behold the animated, earnest man, proceeding to his appointed dwelling, probably in the highest part of the city, and with a little garden at the back.\* It was not far from his house either to St. Peter's, where the consistory held its meetings, or to the old church, in which he preached and taught. In the neighborhood of the *Rue des Chanoines* one has a wide, open view over the fortifications, which were then extensive, of the Jura mountains and the two *Salèves* on the opposite side.

\* This opinion is founded on some expressions in his will; and from the mention of a garden in what was said before his arrival, respecting his dwelling.\*

Calvin would not allow himself to seek refuge among the beauties of nature, but he so much the oftener cast a glance beyond the Alps upon the distracted countries which lay around; and news from the great provinces of Europe formed the frequent subject of his conversation with his friends.

All the hopes excited by the diet of Ratisbone had proved vain: both parties were dissatisfied with this termination. In Hungary, king Zapol, Ferdinand's opponent, was now dead. Soliman had made himself master of the country by treachery, and the emperor found it necessary to arouse the Germans without delay to attack the common enemy. He himself went to Italy, his mind filled with thoughts of a great undertaking, the conquest of Algiers and the humbling of the Sultan. His preparations were on a large scale, but yet were too little for the design. Heaven did not favor him. A terrible storm destroyed the camp of the troops which were landed, and it was found impossible to draw Hassan out of Algiers. Time was scarcely allowed for the deliverance of a part of the troops. Another tempest dispersed the fleet; and the emperor, deeply humbled, but not disheartened, returned to Spain, and immediately after prepared to attack the king of France. In Germany the evangelical party were in treaty with England and France, and Francis gave deceitful promises, while actually encouraging the persecution of our brethren in his dominions. The diet of Spire was announced in January, 1542. Such was the state of public affairs when Calvin began to exercise his office at Geneva as a preacher of repentance.

Not long after his arrival, on one week-day, the great bell called *Clemence* sent its deep tones far and wide over the city and the neighboring valleys. The people flocked to the church. A day of penitence was to be kept. All the three councils assembled, and the preachers announced to the congregation that a heavy judgment impended over it; that the Christian churches were everywhere threatened with the pestilence, with the invasion and the desolating fury of the Turks; and they exhorted their hearers to humble themselves, and to turn to the Lord and entreat him for their brethren. The sacrament having been celebrated, and solemn prayer offered up to God to take the city under his protection, Calvin then proceeded to address the congregation in his own peculiarly devout and solemn tone.

We leave him to his sermon, and will endeavor to give some idea of his work by the following extracts from his letters. Thus



he writes to Farel:—"The people are generally obedient here; they at least listen diligently to their preachers. Their morals are tolerably good, but there are still many errors both of head and heart, which, if they be not gradually rooted out, will occasion, I fear, the greatest evils. Against such inner domestic enemies we should contend with the greatest resolution. This you well know. You know equally well what fellow-laborers I have."

One thought especially employed him at that time. He wished to retain Farel and Viret in Geneva, that they might form a middle point of evangelical power,—a sacred triumvirate. But Neufchatel would not spare Farel, and Viret soon removed.

Again he writes to Farel:—"May God make all things turn out for the best! I am now brought back, as you originally wished. It is necessary however that I should have Viret here, nor can I allow him to be snatched away from me. It is also your duty to help me with all the brethren, unless you are willing that I should labor to no purpose, and be without use the unhappiest of men."

But the first undertaking which employed his whole attention was the establishment of a court of morals, and with this was closely connected the entire revisal of the Genevese laws.

"When I offered," says Calvin, "my help to the senate, I showed that the church could not stand unless a firm government was established, such a one as is prescribed to us in God's Word, and was in use in the old church. I urged many points, from which they might easily understand what I wished. And because the whole thing did not appear clearly understood, I prayed that some people might be given us who might aid in the discussion. They allowed us six. The several articles of church government were now detailed, as to be proposed to the senate. Three of our colleagues testify that they are of the same mind with us both. We may hope that something will be done."

This famous experiment to restore the Roman hierarchical despotism in an aristocratic form, necessarily brought with it a species of church polity. The consistory was the stated censor of the burghers, who were to be rendered victorious by means of a certain external discipline or education, if religion and honor were found not to avail. Thus a theocracy was still to be preserved, as in the Roman church, but changed altogether in form and spirit. The church was intimately bound up with

the state. The state defended the church, which submitted itself to it, and the church in turn ruled the state, because all the burghers were under the inspection of the consistory.

We can see in the prosecution of these ideas the resolute and iron will of the man who came forth to restore order to the world. No opposition, no resistance could break his purpose or disturb his plan. He was banished, because he pursued with unremitting zeal this object, the establishment of order. In Strasburg he labored for the same end, and with equal energy. He would only return to Geneva with the return of discipline; and a few weeks after his arrival, the system of legislation for which he contended was confirmed. It was with him a matter of conscience, a thing not to be disregarded, especially because to him an offence against the sanctity of the Lord's Supper was horrible and martyred his conscience. Hence he pursued this plan his whole life through, with a resolution which seemed as if his own salvation were depending upon its success. The greatest hindrances appeared at the very commencement. In a letter to Myconius he speaks of his great trouble, of the opposition displayed on the part of the nobility and clergy, but much less on that of the people, who saw in the institution of discipline the means of humbling the higher classes.

"There are," he says, "many seeds of dissension in the city, but by gentleness and patience we hope to save the church from suffering on that account, and to keep the people free from its consequences. It is well known how mild and humane Viret is; and I am no rougher, at least in this respect. You will scarcely believe it, yet so it is. I take the preservation of peace and unity so to heart, that I do violence to myself. My friends must allow me this praise. May the Lord grant that I may always retain this feeling, great as is the resistance with which I have to struggle. When we proposed the rules of discipline, the preachers openly agreed with us, because they were ashamed to oppose so reasonable a plan; but they secretly gave the council to understand that they must take care not to cast away their authority, and so cause an insurrection. This treachery was not to be suffered; but we have so managed the affair that no dispute has arisen. We have now, at all events, a tribunal of church-elders, authorized to manage ecclesiastical affairs; and an established discipline, as good as one could desire in the present state of things. But this has not been accomplished without very much trouble: for there are everywhere profane spirits

which seek in all ways to destroy the authority of the church ; and the world will govern according to its own desire, nor submit itself to the rule of Christ. David and Moses are cited against us, as if they were only worldly regents. Give us only such leaders as have the spirit of prophecy, who have both a spiritual and a temporal power, not usurped, but possessed according to God's command and calling, and we will readily resign all things into their hands. Moses himself, before the calling of Aaron, was high-priest ; and David ruled the church, not without God's command and help. Other pious kings have defended with their power the established ordinances, and have left to the church its authority, and to the chief priests the rule which was allowed them by God."

Numberless occupations, some little, some great, such as the planting of a church is likely to bring with it, now crossed each other on his course.

It was commanded the gay population of the sweet, joyous wine-land,—the people who had so long resigned themselves to the fascinations of the dance and other worldly pleasures, to attend church on the week-days ; to be present on Thursdays at the congregational sermon, but afterwards to return to their work. The city was divided into three parishes, St. Peter's, Magdalena, and St. Gervais. Calvin and Viret were to exercise their office in the first and last of these parishes. St. Peter's was for the higher class of persons ; St. Gervais for the people. A stated day of prayer was appointed. The people were ordered to assemble in St. Peter's, to offer up prayers for the neighboring cities, threatened by the pestilence ; and when the prayer time was in the evening, two lights were to be set up to give light, as it is said, to the people,—a protestant luxury this, according to early custom. Christmas-day was no longer to be kept, but Ascension-day was still to be observed.

The people were guilty of frequent blasphemies. It was now ordered, that any one who was convicted of this offence should be led through the city in his shirt, with a lighted candle in his hand, and be compelled to implore forgiveness. Adulterers were to be imprisoned, to pay a fine, and to do open penance. The consistory was especially ordered to make diligent inquiry after the offences committed at the marriage of a citizen, on which occasion trumpets were sounded, and masquerading, games, and such-like things were seen. All plays were strictly forbidden at which money was staked. Profane singing was everywhere

prohibited ; and attendance on preaching as strictly commanded. The reformer was once at the beginning of his career insulted, but the offender was punished by the council.

Another care which the planting of a church brought with it was the establishment of a good school. The agent in this was Maturinus Cordier, who soon after invited the famous Castellio to Geneva. Farel also had opened a school at the very commencement of the reformation, but it fell into decay. This shows the chief point in the struggles of the reformation : it demanded light, scientific cultivation, the life of the spirit. Subsequently it belonged to Calvin to found an academy, and to assemble a large number of erudite men.

In a letter dated December, 1541, he expresses his joy that even the enemies of the Gospel diffused light, and he exclaims, "Dolet has printed the Psalter at Lyons, and will soon begin the Bible. The translation will be that of Olivetan. Now let who can deny that Satan himself is the servant of God."

Viret left Geneva in July, 1542, and Calvin prayed that two assistant preachers might be chosen. They were presented before the three councils. "The brethren, whom we a short-time since elected, will, I trust, after a little practice prove useful. For the rest, those who are anxious to advance in their course, wish that I would preach more than usual ; this I have begun to do, and will continue to do, till others are better liked. I care little, as you know, for commendation and praise, but I will do whatever appears good for the edification of the people. In regard to my commentary on the book of Genesis, if the Lord prolong my life, and I have sufficient leisure, I shall probably take the work in hand. My chief care however must be to fulfil my day and my present calling. If circumstances still prove favorable, I will then live for posterity. I would fain write more, but my wife is unwell, and hence my thoughts are distracted."

The church was here, as everywhere else, irregularly developed, and was partly subject to the state. Thus a controversy arose respecting church property. The following striking observations are found in letters written at this period, and which show what were Calvin's views on this important subject of dispute. He writes to Viret :—

"You see that the church is robbed and left destitute. The magistrate gives what he likes, as if it were his own, and he might deal with it according to his fancy. It is not easy to say



what you ought to do. At the same time there are few who have sufficient magnanimity to expose themselves to hate. Most men sacrifice their duty to their weakness, and prefer retaining the favor of the world to the hazard of offending it by a firm and resolute conduct. You will not effect much, but at least we must not support injustice."

It is evident that he wished the church to possess property, and pay the clergy, and that it should not be in the hands of the state. He instructed his friends how to act in this struggle. "I spoke with Bucer on this subject at Ratisbone. There are two things for you to consider. First, that the spoiling of the church will bring much vexation with it; secondly, that it is altogether unlawful. The papists have now a proper cause of complaint; neither the people, in whatever corner they be, nor the preachers, can give any reply. With what face can they defend the robbing of the church, thus left naked, who attack the sacrilege of the papists? And what an example for the princes, who are only too ready to do such things! Lastly, what evil consequences must we not look for when the church has been stripped of all! The second argument is the point around which the whole turns,—that belongs not to the magistrate, which has been ever consecrated to Christ and the church. We may here adduce both law and custom, to prove how these possessions ought to be distributed. What had been consecrated to the church a godless paunch devoured. The proper use of church goods must be very well known. To take them away, therefore, is attended with an anathema and a curse, that which is holy being thereby desecrated. But all suspicion must be carefully avoided that you do not appropriate what does not belong to you. You must show, that the best rule of reformation is that which king Josiah established, namely, that the magistrate has the inspection, but the ministers the administration. You might further show, that you would be willing for the magistrate to retain the right of administration, provided that the yearly income was fairly distributed, and that nothing was lost."

On another occasion Calvin wrote,\* "that he often spoke in his sermons of church property. He called God and man to witness that a heavy judgment was hanging over the city. He had gained nothing in the council, however earnestly he had labored to accomplish his object."

\* In the year 1545. Ep. 66.

But, affected as he was by the general state of the church, a good trust in God strengthened and animated him. A glance at the state of affairs will explain his feelings, and the meaning of many of his remarks. France continued the war against Spain with great vigor. In the year 1542 Francis attacked his enemy with five armies, but with no result. Philip of Hesse allowed himself to be deceived by Granvella, at the diet of Ratisbone, by the offer of the command of the Spanish troops to be sent against France, and he pledged himself to undertake nothing against the house of Austria. Thus the emperor obtained time to humble the duke William of Julich, Cleves, and Berg, and to suppress the reformation in his states. Maurice of Saxony could not be prevailed upon to join the league of Smalcalde, but he readily took part in the war against the Turks. The elector of Brandenburg, Joachim, also refused to join it, from respect to the emperor. But the dislike of these two princes against each other went so far, that for some trifling cause they were on the point of commencing hostilities.

Notwithstanding all hindrances, the evangelical faith was advancing with giant strides in every direction. Calvin wrote at this time: "We have found what a serpent Satan is. But though a hundred monsters spring from one, and though a thousand heads be in the place of one, still we know ourselves to be invincible, if we do but war under the standard of our Christ, and fight with his weapons." To Oswald Myconius, preacher at Basel, he writes: "As far as I can learn from your letters, the affairs of Germany are not improved the value of a hair since the termination of the diet of Ratisbone. The commencement there promised well. Here, so far as I can see, those furies, who desire nothing so much as confusion, have undertaken all the parts of the play. I can easily deduce from what is related how it has gone with the margrave of Brandenburg. As he strives more after fame than is right, they have intoxicated him by offering him the conduct of the war. There is one thing however which always comforts me in the most distressing moments: it is, that the kingdom of the wicked cannot long stand so unrestrained in one place. The Lord will at length, as you say, take its affairs in hand. Both at home and abroad, and every day, there is more than enough, not merely to weaken, but quite to exhaust us, did we not know that it is God's work which employs us. Let this thought therefore be sufficient for us, even in our greatest sufferings, that Christ has already overcome the world,

that we may continually reap this fruit. Munster's\* arrival has been very comforting to me."

As a proof of Calvin's frequent call to take part in politics, and of the confidence reposed in him, though a stranger, and of his great moderation in the excited state of the republic, the following circumstances may be mentioned.

The Bernese, who were ever ready to tyrannize over Geneva, had seized upon several villages belonging to it, and, as they would not restore them, Basel was called in to decide the dispute. The arbitrator readily pronounced that several of the places should be restored to Geneva. But the decision displeased both parties. Geneva was angry; Calvin was called into the council, and gave his opinion in favor of the partial restoration. Bern continued the dispute for two years. "I am greatly distressed at this," says Calvin; "I believed the quarrel with Bern at an end, but it again breaks forth. The two hundred had already decided that we must yield to Bern, as our Amadeus (Perrin) said. He however retracted his opinion, and described, in lofty words, how injurious this cession would be. Some followed. It went so far that the sixty were called after the two hundred. When the matter was laid before the latter, behold! Pagnetus urged them forward, as the only Atlas of the republic, with such abusive language that they consented to rob the republic of its greatest rights. He was carried so far by the heat of the argument, that he threatened the senate with the wood-market, where traitors are usually beheaded. A great uproar followed this. At length the matter was decided in favor of his opinion; but he was compelled to kneel down and ask pardon of the assembly. All this proceeded from the workshop of Macrin, who had determined to keep the two cities in continual feud."† In September, 1543, when the subject was again brought forward, Calvin says:‡ "I was summoned to the council; and partly because I held it useful for the republic, and partly because the opposition seemed to me altogether unproductive of any good, my advice was not simply to adopt the decision of the Basel arbitrators. For the rest, I hope the answer will be such that, if it do not give satisfaction in every point, it will at all events exhibit a becoming moderation. If you pay us a visit you will understand the affair still better.

\* Sebastian Munster, at first professor at Heidelberg, then at Basel, where he died in 1552.

† MSS. Gen. to Viret.

‡ MSS. Gen. to Viret.

While I was writing to you, the news arrived from Bern that everything was settled. I learnt however, from a long and angry debate in the council, that a new discussion was commenced. It was resolved that seven of the members, together with myself, should consider the terms of the arrangement. If Satan do not again find his way among us, I have good hope. I believe that I have done much towards bringing them back to the wish for peace: they are sufficiently decided to be inclined to yield."

This affair was finally settled in the year 1544. The alliance with Bern and the proposals made by Basel were confirmed.

Calvin was so much in request during the whole of this transaction, that he writes thus: "I have not time enough to look out of my house at the blessed sun, and if things continue thus I shall forget what sort of an appearance it has. When I have settled my usual business, I have so many letters to write, so many questions to answer, that many a night is spent without any offering of sleep being brought to nature." He felt himself, however, tranquil and cheerful when his work was completed, and says, "I compare myself to a warrior who has slain many enemies, when I have got over many heavy labors." He then assures his friends that he could refuse no man his aid, whatever time and trouble it might cost him.\*

It is worthy of remark that Farel had no rest. His element was to reform, to hazard everything for God and his holy Gospel. As soon as he had put the Neuenburg church in some degree of order, he meditated new victories. His attention had long been turned towards Metz, which seemed ready to receive the truth, but where the clergy and the nobility were still in a state of strife. In the year 1542, however, circumstances wore a more favorable aspect. The protestants there invited Farel to come among them, and what had discouraged others he readily undertook with the bold spirit of a missionary. Some of his friends disapproved of the step; but Calvin, without whose advice Farel would do nothing, encouraged him in his resolution.

"May the Lord," he said, "preserve you for his church, safe and well, wherever you may be. If you go to Metz, as we hope you will, may he open this door for his Gospel, and fill you with the spirit of his wisdom, foresight, moderation, zeal, and power, that you may be armed on all sides for this difficult and arduous undertaking. I see indeed how many and various, and what

\* From Tischer's Life of Calvin; but the source of the information is not mentioned.



perilous struggles await you, and what especial help you need from God. But you are neither so unprepared nor inexperienced as to be alarmed at dangers, however great they seem; and the power of Christ, which has always wonderfully supported you, is ever the same. We shall look with continual anxiety to see what progress he may give you. You know well enough that in the present day the false idea prevails, that both things and resolves are to be judged of according to their consequences."

Farel commenced his work on the third of September, 1542. It was determined that he should preach the following Sunday. The church-yard of the Dominicans was chosen for the purpose, because a pulpit had been raised there. The number of hearers was very great. During the sermon two Dominicans appeared, and commanded the preacher to be silent. Farel took no heed of this command. They then began to ring all their bells; but Farel raised his powerful voice so loud, that it was heard above them. The Dominicans now ordered the pulpit which he had desecrated to be torn down. An open disputation took place between Farel and a Franciscan monk. Farel defended the spiritual participation of the body of Christ, and the next day three thousand persons assembled to hear him. He was summoned before the magistrates, and asked, by whose command and desire he preached. He answered that Christ commanded, and his members desired it. The protestants set some one who resembled him on a horse, and accompanied him out of the city; but the missionary remained concealed in Metz.

A proposal had been made to admit the city into the league of Smalcalde; but even Luther considered this hazardous. The duke of Lorraine, to whom Farel addressed an excellent letter, remained an irreconcilable enemy. The papists of the city wrote to the emperor, who decided, that all the inhabitants of Metz should continue catholics till the general council. Farel preached for a time in the neighborhood of Metz, at Gorze. But here the people were surprised and beaten down by the duke of Guise, just after they had solemnized the Lord's Supper. Farel escaped to Strasburg. The reformed were banished, and most of them followed their preacher. In the end, the count von Fürstenberg obtained a chapel for them in the parish of St. Nicholas at Metz, and the free observance of their religion. But they enjoyed this liberty only a short time: the preacher was expelled by an order of Charles V. Myconius afterwards related this to Calvin.

Caroli, the enemy and accuser of these admirable men, appeared at that time at Metz, for the purpose of destroying the effects of Farel's labors. Protected by the council, and full of pride, he sent a noisy, pompous challenge to Farel for life and death. Calvin now proceeded like a lion, slowly leaving his lair, to attack the old enemy. He went to Strasburg, and his appearance at Metz would probably have ended the affair; but the business did not proceed. The courage of the catholic party was too much on the increase, and the German states assembled at Smalcalde, whither the bishop of Huy had gone with some deputies, did not think it wise for the present to declare themselves for Metz. Three letters exist which Calvin wrote from Strasburg, where he was obliged to remain with Farel, for want of a safe-conduct, respecting this matter to the council.

The state-protocol of the 7th of July, 1543, records that news had been received from Calvin. He travelled to Strasburg through Bern. Viret accompanied him so far. In fourteen days he was to be at Metz on his way back. He sent Farel's second letter to Caroli. The council ordered it to be printed. From another statement we learn that the archbishop of Cologne was very much in favor of the Gospel, that the Turks were ready to invade Germany at three different points, and that the emperor, now engaged in defending the Netherlands against the king of France, was in great perplexity.

"My arrival happens at the worst possible time," wrote Calvin to the preachers; "for the catholics in Metz are made astonishingly proud by the emperor's near neighborhood to them, and they allege his authority as a reason for their not daring to yield anything to us. They think, that while he is so near, it is not proper that they should take the state affairs into consideration without asking his permission. As it would be both dangerous and useless to travel to Metz under these circumstances, the council has resolved to send some one to Smalcalde, to desire that an embassy may be despatched with us to Metz in the name of the whole body, and so force from its authorities what they will not willingly accord us. The journey to Smalcalde usually occupies eight days, but may be accomplished by a messenger in six. We have resolved to await the answer here, to save ourselves from having undertaken so important a task in vain. It will be no slight advantage for us to have the deputies as our companions, that that hound (Caroli) may be compelled to hold the disputation, from which he not only shrinks,

but absolutely despises it. Protected now by the presence of the emperor, and lurking behind the ambush thus afforded him, he rages more fiercely than ever. But the Lord will soon, we hope, suppress this godless fury. I beseech you to be watchful and careful during my absence in fulfilling your duties. There are many reasons to impress upon you the necessity of not allowing any scandal or change in the church to occur while I am away. If you do your duty with a right mind, with earnestness and proper zeal, the Lord will give a successful result. In the mean while commend us in your prayers to God, and this his work, about which we are now employed: it is not wanting in difficulties and dangers, and prayer is the help which we need from man. Farel greets you most kindly. I not only enjoy my usual health, but have improved it; so that I am even better than ordinarily. Farewell, dearest brother, and be careful for the edifying of the church.”\*

Calvin, after six weeks, returned to Geneva at the request of the council. Farel was seen there, after his persecution at Metz, in somewhat ragged attire. The council, which had already gladdened him with a present, thought it proper, on account of the hard persecution which he had suffered, to give him a new suit, such a one as had been presented to Calvin.† About this time Calvin began to interest himself in the Mompelgarten church. The district in which it was established belonged to duke George of Wurtemberg. This prince had joined the reformed church, often visited Zurich, and conversed with Bullinger. Peter Tossanus taught in France. Ecolampadius and Farel had frequently pressed him to leave France and assist Farel, but in vain, till at length the papists drove him out of the country. He then went to Zurich. Farel besought Zwingli to send Tossanus to Orbe, but duke George needed his help in reforming his church. Some changes were to be effected, and the Mompelgarteners wished to confer with Farel: he invited them to Geneva, and Calvin in writing to him answered some weighty questions.

“With regard to the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, it is a good custom to administer it to the sick, if time and circumstances be favorable. There is also not much to object to the

\* MSS. Gen. Cal. Jul., 1543.

† Farel was invited to remain at Geneva, but he said that he was not able to do so then. He also refused at first to accept this present. Calvin however pressed him to receive it. “Vestis apud me est, donec reperiat qui ferat. Bene factum quod recusasti, sed nunc honeste accipere poteris.”

practice of giving it to condemned criminals, if they desire it, and seem properly prepared; but this is with the condition that there be really a communion, namely that the bread is broken in an assembly of believers. To administer the sacrament in a common assembly, without order, when only one person desires it, were too great a folly. To obey in this the direction of a prince, would be to sacrifice all church regulations to the caprice of an individual. To permit midwives to baptize is a horrible desecration of the sacrament: this therefore must not only be rejected, but if the prince should proceed to enforce it by authority, you must resist even unto blood rather than suffer such a superstition. With regard to burials, I should be glad to see the following alteration,—namely, that they may take place in the church-yard, rather than in the church itself. I should wish an address to be made there. You need not protest any further against the use of bells, if the prince will not assent to your wishes. Not that I think it good, but because it is not worth while to dispute on the subject."

In the midst of these events, the interesting intelligence arrived that a new champion for the things of God had appeared. "There is a man just come out of Italy," says Bucer, "who is very learned in Greek, Latin and Hebrew, and who is admirably skilled in the holy Scriptures. He is forty-four years old, of a serious disposition, and endowed with an acute judgment. His name is Peter Martyr, and he was a member of the chapter in the cathedral of Lucca."

This is the man whom we shall hereafter see publishing the Gospel, first at Oxford and next at Zurich, and then again with Beza at the conference at Poissy. He was a genuine friend of Calvin, who regarded him with the highest esteem and love, and called him the wonder of Italy.

Vast numbers of fugitives from France and Italy were already flocking to Geneva: Calvin rendered them both spiritual consolation and outward help. But the first season of his labors was greatly disturbed by the general pestilence: plague and famine existed in every part of the land. A body of Swiss troops in passing through the city had spread the infection there. The custom was already established of sending the sick into a separate building in the suburbs. It was now necessary to seek the help of some persevering minister; but most of the preachers were terrified at the idea of the pestilence; three, however, endowed with a noble courage, offered their services; they were,



Castellio, Blanchet and Calvin. When lots were cast to determine who was to commence, the lot fell upon Castellio, but he immediately changed his mind. Calvin insisted upon again casting lots, but the council and Blanchet himself would not permit it. The latter undertook the perilous duty: he died at the end of ten months. The pestilence broke out several times in the years 43-45, and the reason of this, as we shall see, was subsequently discovered.

The following notices from the state-protocol show how miserable was the spirit of Calvin's colleagues at this time, how little help he could expect from them, and how he stood alone beneath the cloud. He complained before the council that some of the preachers avoided going to the hospital, and had declared that they would rather go to the devil. Upon this the council admonished the ministers. But the pestilence continued to prevail, and in order to strengthen the minds of the sufferers, and direct them above, the Lord's Supper was solemnly celebrated. In the year 1543 the plague raged so fiercely that it was found necessary to close the courts of law. As Blanchet was dead, the preachers were called upon to elect another to supply his place. The high estimation in which Calvin was held by the council was strikingly shown on this occasion. It was especially ordered that the ministers should not allow him to draw lots with them. He was necessary to the church. But his brethren seemed to have been altogether wanting in spiritual courage. When called with Calvin, who would not separate from them, before the council, to make choice of a pastor for the hospital, they openly declared that, "to undertake such an office, a man needed great resolution and must fear nothing; that they had not this firmness, and that therefore they deemed it best to choose a stranger." They were again summoned before the council, but with an express direction to exclude Calvin. "Again however they declared that, though it might be their duty to minister in the pest-house, they had not the courage to do so." The preacher Geneston was the only one ready to go, should the lot fall to him. But this true servant of the Lord soon died of the pestilence, with his wife, and most of those who served in the hospital. Such was the change produced in the city when Calvin's fervent spirit had had time thoroughly to pervade it; such was then the increase in its moral force, that it was found necessary to bridle the apostolic zeal and devotion of the clergy.

The following words addressed by Calvin to Viret, about this

time show how his naturally timid mind struggled with a sense of duty, which always conquered.

"The plague has begun to rage horribly: few of the persons attacked recover. It was necessary for the consistory to appoint some one to comfort the sufferers. If anything happens to Blanchet, I fear that I must venture upon doing something after him; for, as you say, we are debtors to all the members of Christ's body, and we must not withdraw from those who most need our help. It is not my opinion however that, in order to help a part, we should let the whole church fall into disgrace. But so long as the Lord deems us worthy of this office, I cannot see what excuse we have, if, from fear of danger, we forsake those who most require consolation."

We may here, by way of comparison, mention how Luther confessed his fear of death at the time of the pestilence in Wittenberg; but in reference only to leaving the city, for he had not been chosen to the office of ministering to the infected. He lived to witness three of these visitations of God's avenging angel. In the year 1516 he thus wrote to Lange:\*

"What shall I say? It is come, and it advances horribly and rapidly, especially against young people. And you advise me and Bartholomew to flee! But whither? I trust the world would not sink, even if brother Martinus did die. If the plague continues, I shall send the brethren round about into the world, but as for myself I am fixed here. Duty forbids me to flee, and I cannot do so till that which now commands me reverses the command. Not that I am free from the fear of death, for I am no Apostle Paul, but only a student of Paul. I hope however that the Lord will at length set me free, even from my fear."

The care which the council manifested for the life of Calvin, gives us occasion to speak of the position which he occupied at the commencement of this period, and to correct some erroneous impressions as to the estimation in which he was held by the republic.

It is interesting to observe how the once-persecuted and despised Calvin, who dare not undertake his work without the assistance of Farel and Viret, now suddenly rose to so high a position, that his advice was sought, as we have seen, in matters purely political, and that his life was regarded as too precious to be exposed to the danger of the pestilence. Much has been said on the esteem entertained for Calvin in Geneva; much on

\* T. xxi. p. 561. Walchsche Ausgabe.

his art of governing men; but it is difficult to determine what may be rightly said.

After having carefully considered all that may be depended upon, I have come to the conclusion that his influence was subject to various changes. He was never, as many persons now imagine, all-powerful in the city. The forms of the republic, and the presbyterian form of the church, are incompatible with the despotism ascribed to him. His influence was more indirect, and it changed according to the men who stood with him at the helm of the state, or the character of his successful opponents. Calvin never acted from the love of power in state affairs. It may be safely said, that he was always viewed by the old Genevese with jealousy, and as a stranger.

Many instances may be adduced to prove that his influence and authority were sometimes almost wholly lost. Thus he writes to Bullinger during the trial of Servetus:—"Their folly and rage have increased to such a degree, that all which we state is received with distrust. Were we to say it is light at noon-time, they would immediately begin to doubt it." In the year 1556, when he was at the height of his power, he wrote:—"I know well what the wicked babble about me; but I have withdrawn myself from the government, and no longer exercise any influence in it, though they say that I arrogate all power to myself. I am therefore living like a stranger in this city. The senate never summons me, as if it needed not my advice even in the greatest necessity. It may be either because it deems it not proper, or because it is not willing to receive the help of a stranger, or because it finds that I avoid such occupation."

Calvin, on whom the office of censor had been conferred at an earlier period (as we learn from the state-protocol of September 29, 1542), was himself subsequently exposed to the censorship, an humiliation which was hard for him to bear.

In a letter written in the year 1554, he says, "I was within a little of offering my writing to Vulcan; for when I presented it to the council, it was resolved to refer it to the censors. I felt so indignant that I declared to the four syndics, that if I lived a thousand years I would never publish anything in this city."

On the other hand, no doubt can be entertained of the high esteem cherished for him by the council and people of Geneva. They proved to him by numerous little attentions, presents and the like, that they were well aware of his worth. Thus they furnished him with a courier on his journeys, and when he was

sick, in 1545, a secretary was provided him at the public cost. This respect he retained to the end of his life; for when the duchess of Ferrara desired a clergyman to be sent her from Geneva, the free choice of any of those in the city was allowed her with the exception of Calvin and Beza, whom the state could not spare. Indeed, when his last afflicting malady threatened to prove mortal, every one in the state was required to pray for his restoration. We may therefore at once refute the assertion of Calvin's enemies, which imputes to him worldly ambition and the love of power, and even designates him the pope of Geneva. If he exercised a ruling influence over others, by the mere force of his own character, this resulted from his natural superiority, not from his love of power, which was unknown to his humble spirit. Bretschneider says rightly, in his review of Calvin, that "men of powerful character and superior minds must unavoidably acquire a mastery over those with whom they are brought in contact."

Calvin ridiculed the absurdity of those who envied his authority, or who seemed to set a high value on the influence which he had acquired after his long labors, and wished, for their punishment, that they might be his successors. It is however conclusive in his favor, that he identified himself with his doctrine, and that he considered it his duty to express himself indignantly against opponents, because he knew that in opposing him they desired to suppress his doctrine. His power was never exercised despotically in the consistory: this is evident from his own declaration. Thus he says among other things to Viret, that in the affair which concerned a certain Sonnerius, whom Viret had commended to him, he had done what he could, but had not succeeded; that he had endeavored to introduce the business skilfully, and had often interrupted his colleagues to soften their judgment, but that they had remained immovable. He had first stated his own opinion, which did not reach the ears of the moderator. Only two, he adds, of his colleagues were on his side, while ten were against him. "Although," he says, "I employed every kind of opposition, they compelled me to subscribe to the class, but with the praise of the man." After some further allusions he concludes with these words,—“How could I deprive my brethren of their right and freedom?”

In a letter to Clauburg he thus expresses himself: “How groundless the slander is that I am a tyrannical ruler, I leave my colleagues to judge, for they certainly have never complained



that they feel themselves oppressed by my power: on the contrary, they frequently object to me that I am too shy, and do not act freely enough when there is need of the exercise of my authority, which all regard as beneficial. If people could only see under what hard conditions I am obliged to perform my duties, and how unable I am ever to arrogate anything to myself, they would certainly be ashamed of their light and groundless speeches. But if by the utmost caution I cannot escape the attacks of the wicked, not only will the testimony of my conscience be sufficient, but the well-known fact, the experience of the public, will utterly refute all that the noisy spirit of slander has so busily spread abroad."

After having given this general view of the position of the reformer in the little republic, we must here break the thread of the historical narrative, to exhibit his influence and labors under a clearer light, and take a closer view of his principles as a reformer, of his legislation and church polity, as well as of his practical views. The spirit which animated his labors can only be properly described as the spirit of theocracy in the highest sense of the term.

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## CHAPTER III.

### CALVIN A THEOCRAT.

COMBINED with the life, and with the progressive development, of Christianity in man, is the inward necessity, urging the church, according to the idea that God, the Lord, is the sole ruler of the universe, to convert the world into the form of a Christian theocracy. His kingdom begins through the church, and shall be extended, spiritually, by its means. All the heathen states were theocratic. This idea of a theocracy, in its highest character, existed in Moses, whose state was a symbolical representation of the world,—the kingdom of God. It existed also in each of the judges; and at a later period, and more spiritually, in the schools of the prophets, which Samuel founded for the defence of the divine government against the invasions of worldly might. The Christian church developed itself with the state, not as in anywise subject to it, but working spiritually upon it, so that

the old theocracy lay concealed in the germ. Soon a new kingdom of God, great and wonderful, unfolded itself in the catholic church, but in an unchristian form and troubled by worldly passions. Still, the worthiest of the popes, such as desired the salvation of the world, kept the idea of a divine government constantly in view, and pursued it with a clear knowledge of its consequences. At length they subjected the empire to the church, till they were subdued in their turn; because they lost sight of the true and spiritual notion of the kingdom of God, and desired to govern it in their own name, and as worldly princes.

Calvin and the other reformers also entertained this idea, so profoundly involved in the spirit of Christianity. An ideal theocracy swept clearly defined before them, but they had too much to do with reform to be able to treat it practically. Calvin however pursued the idea with peculiar zeal, and his influence on the Genevese constitution is then most correctly characterized when it is described as theocratic. By his religious spirit, by his acting in the name of God, he exercised a distinct theocratic influence, not only on the little state of Geneva, but upon the whole church, and through that upon the whole world. In a word, he desired that God might be king, that the temporal power should rule only in his name, that it should employ the laws and exercise its influence for the salvation of souls; since it is only in the idea of a theocracy that the union of church and state can exist, both, according to this, having for their end and aim the glory of God and the salvation of a lost world. Often did Calvin stand forth, like the old prophets, to oppose the temporal power; and with him, all the churches animated by his spirit. Inspired by this divine feeling, we see him, in the year 1558, before the council, when the syndics were chosen. He raised his voice, and admonished them with grandeur and dignity to proceed humbly and in the name of God. "Let us consider," he said, "to what danger the republic has been exposed of late, through the unworthiness of the governing citizens; and let us remember the insignificance of the state, that our souls may be preserved from pride."

The evangelical church is now manifesting its desire to realize that grand ideal, which the middle ages sought for, but sought for in vain, because the time was not yet fulfilled. Such ideas, in their purest form, find to-day their reflection in the soul. There is a visible apprehension of the excellency of that

theocratic union of the church and state, which are related to each other, in their foundation, as the law and the Gospel, so that they can never properly become estranged. The church must always remain the mother of all spiritual principles; the state must continue to be the arm, the directing power, of the law; the church, the guardian of the spirit, without power, without sword, armed only with prayer. The state is to protect her with its power; the church is to govern spiritually, committing the earthly rule altogether and without reserve to the civil magistrate, who secures to her in return the free, unrestricted exercise of her spiritual right over the domains of religion. All worldly domination in the church is Satanic, but no outward power can hinder her spiritual authority. As soon as the church seeks worldly rule, she must fall back into bondage; but it is her first duty to diffuse spiritual life. Lovingly and earnestly desires she the sanctification and reformation of the rude force of the world. She must therefore strive for the realization of another *Ideal*, that is, the Christian edification of the community by means of instruction and admonition; by a firmly established system of church discipline which numbers among its first essentials the adoption of a confession of faith, a catechism, and a liturgy or form of worship. This unity and constitution must be approved of and protected by the state. Both must labor to put down the unchristian anarchy which springs from the opposition of equal powers in church and state.

It was Calvin's wish to solve this difficult problem; and the question arises, whether we can content ourselves with the mode in which he solved it; or whether, after the experience of three hundred years, we desire a new solution. Three different forms of church government have been created by the reformation,—the episcopal in England, the consistorial in Germany, and the presbyterian in France and Scotland: a higher, and the most perfect of all, must be constructed on these three; but the elements of this better system are already existing, in principle, in the Calvinistic form.

As the reformer combined, according to his theocratic system, the church and state in a close bond of union, we must view it in relation to both the one and the other. It is very unjustly said in one of the latest reviews of his character and influence, "The ecclesiastical power was so mixed up in Geneva with the civil, that this new creation left Calvin in possession of absolute authority." Whereas the power of the church was subjected, in

the most distinct manner, to the temporal; the state had even the right to settle matters of doctrine, and to appoint the clergy, when approved, to their stations; so that Calvin's authority must always have arisen, not from his political power, but from his character. His legislative influence, as we shall shortly see, was more conspicuous than his political. It is therefore said, with equal falsehood, in the same report on Gruet's affair, that "the pastor ordered sentence of death to be passed." This sentence proceeded from the existing authorities, and would have been passed without Calvin's intervention; but he expressed his horror against the crime of the culprit with his usual earnestness, and may thence have inspired the whole of the little state with corresponding energy. Far juster therefore is the following judgment on the theocratic constitution of Geneva:—"As the constitution was religious as well as political, every heresy disturbed the tranquillity of the community; and it was necessary therefore that heretics should be punished according to the laws of the city. In the year 1536 every one was deprived of the right of citizenship who did not hold the received doctrine; and from the year 1541 the consistory had the right of compelling the magistrate and the people to remain true to the doctrine of the church, as well as to the laws of morality. The republic being founded on this religious principle, it was necessary that its punishments should be so also."

This theocratic tendency was implanted in the people. Circumstances, as brought about by the earlier spirit of catholic rule, and the catholic theocracy itself, were now to give way to protestantism. But this shows plainly how unreasonable it is to lay the blame on the reformer alone, for that which was grounded on the development of the state itself, and was connected with the very tendency of the times, its germ being visible when Calvin, in the year 1536, possessed as yet not a particle of authority.

Under these peculiar circumstances politics became mingled with religion, and religion was contemplated from a political point of view. Never however did the reformer seek to obtain any direct political influence: his spirit was too exalted for political intrigue. Like all great men, he had a certain dignity to maintain, and he desired to conquer not by little means, but by the force of his own ideas. This is evident from the fact, that while all other strangers, and his own brother, obtained the



right of citizenship through his exertions, he never sought it for himself, and waited quietly till it was offered him at a later period of his life. The ardent interest however which he took in political affairs necessarily gave him some influence, and it was at all times a definite object with him to bring the forms of the state into harmony with that of his church government. We see from his letters with what a lively interest he contemplated the affairs of the political world. His acknowledged acute perception of the great European relations procured for him the confidence of the state, which, surrounded as it was by powerful neighbors, often found itself in difficulty. The state-protocols record that the council frequently summoned him to its aid in weighty affairs. In a more important government the influence which he thus exercised would have become renowned. If we consider his life in the republic, it appears to have been a continual conflict with the rude power of those who did not understand his mission, who desired to overthrow religion and church authority at any price, even if it were with the whole state, and who therefore regarded with hatred the French exiles who gathered round the reformer. But Calvin at once ceased to hold any intercourse with even the best among the last-mentioned persons, as soon as they forsook the doctrine which he viewed as saving truth. His friendship with the nobleman of Burgundy, as we shall see hereafter, shows plainly that Calvin pursued only the grand idea of belief. He had rest when syndics were chosen from the theocratic party; conflict, when they were elected from among the libertines. We cannot help discovering however a great degree of sensibility, a fulness of southern passion, in his behavior. The Genevese council moreover consisted of persons of a hot, wild character. Justice was executed with a stern hand. The activity of the consistory converted it often into a species of inquisition, but one purely Christian, which, with the best will, proposed to itself the best end, and which, instead of being animated by political selfishness, was spiritual, moral, and, if one may use the expression, emulous of saving power. And though we are ready to allow that, under certain circumstances, Calvin's conduct in Geneva may create astonishment, it must at the same time be observed, that the whole man, with his grand aims and duties, and as existing in his particular age, ought to be considered. It is evidently inconsistent with the spirit of a true historian, to view so great

a phenomenon as Calvinism only in the narrow limits of a small, insignificant state, and in its mere relation to the Genevese; and not in its sublime, universal and historical importance.

The key to Calvin's life, as already remarked, is the Old Testament spirit, which so wonderfully blended itself with that of Christianity. Like Moses, who, regarding the interests of the kingdom of God, spared not the life of man, Calvin has this axiom, "Those who despise the honor of God must be punished with the sword." When and how often this has been done is not the main question, but it may be asked, whether in certain times and circumstances this spirit might not be recognized in Christianity as divine? This determines the whole inquiry respecting the moral of Calvin's proceeding. But that he felt himself impelled by God to act as he did, appears from all his declarations as a candid and conscientious man; and they who judge him, must judge the old prophets as well. Calvin renewed, as it were, the giving of the law from Sinai, and that at a period when a new principle of life was about to unfold itself in the human race, and the earth felt itself moved from one end to the other. Who stood with him on the holy mount amid the storms of that age? Who heard the words which God then spoke to him?

Let us consider what Calvin himself said to those who wished to restrain his zeal:—"The Holy Ghost has given us David for an example, and David in his zeal was a type of Jesus Christ. Paul insists that the zeal of the house of God should devour us. Hence Christ did not say to the disciples, who wished to bring down fire from heaven, that the law of severity had been annulled: he was only angry because they had not the genuine zeal of the prophets; and even the tender-hearted disciple John desires that we should shun the enemy of God. Thus the spirit of the Old Testament is revealed in the New, as that of the New in the Old." Can we help exclaiming here, "The Lord has sent us in Calvin the fervent Elias of the Old Covenant, and has inspired him with the lofty spirit of a Paul!"

From the idea of theocracy necessarily arises that of a legislation, which answers to the holiness of God, to the notion of a church representing redeeming love, and to that of the sanctification of souls, which responds to the sanctifying spirit. We must consequently consider the theocratic reformer in the threefold light of a lawgiver, a founder of an ecclesiastical constitution, and a practical minister of religion, or pastor. And since

the religious constitution unfolded itself in the civil state, it will be proper also to view Calvin, in the first instance, in his relation to the state; that is, as a legislator in the existing constitution, without which we shall not be able to understand the new form of the church.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### CALVIN AS A LEGISLATOR.

THE civil polity of Geneva existed before Calvin's arrival there. He exercised an influence upon it, in so far as he brought its fundamental principle into harmony with the new ecclesiastical constitution. Calvin's principle was that of an aristocratic oligarchy: it was this which he chose for the church. He wished the state, as well as the church, to be governed by a select body of substantial men; and, these being once appointed, the council as well as the consistory was to choose the new members, in the place of those who retired yearly. Moderate, and fond of peace, he had no love for the republican form of government; no trace exists in his writings of the notion of the sovereignty of the people. Where however constitutional forms existed, there he held it to be the sacred duty of the representatives of the people to oppose themselves to the unjust pretensions of the rulers, and to secure for the poor people, as he expresses himself, the enjoyment of peace; having in his mind, perhaps, the parliament of France, which neglected to oppose persecution.\* On the legislation of Geneva, however, he exercised a twofold, a direct and an indirect, influence. Immediately after his return he established the code of morals, and as this new creation entirely altered the position of the state, the whole edifice required to be refashioned. Calvin's knowledge as a civilian was well understood, and the revision of the laws generally was committed to him, as well as the task of framing a code of morals.†

By his strenuous co-operation a collection of laws and ordi-

\* Instit. lib. iv. c. xx.

† Reference is made to this in the State Protocol of October 4, 1541, and in others of the two following years.

nances was completed in the year 1543, and in the same year a new liturgy was given to the church. Picot,\* in his History of Geneva, says, that the council this year collected all the laws and edicts of the state into one body; that these edicts defined the duties of the several magistrates, and the manner in which they were to be elected. These laws agree, for the most part, with those of 1568, which remained as the basis of the legislature till the last century, except that mention was still made of the office of a captain-general, subsequently abolished. In another historian† we read that "Calvin was one of the most excellent of those who labored in producing the legislative system of 1543. To establish it, the '*Franchises et la sentence de Payerne*' were employed, and some edicts published at various periods. Certain new laws, and some few old customs, were also introduced. This system was followed in civil processes, and where it was not sufficient the Roman laws decided. It remained till 1568, when it was revised. By this system, the relations of the citizens among each other, and the whole mechanism of the state, were determined, as well as the relations of the church." A third writer‡ says:—"In the first part of the undertaking, the relations of the citizens, as far as they were non-political, were regulated altogether according to the Roman laws, which gave occasion to numerous disputes." Germain Colladon,§ a civilian, was commissioned thoroughly to revise the earlier system, and he laid the result of his labors before the greater and lesser council, which confirmed the body of laws thus revised on the 29th of January, 1568. Colladon proceeded throughout in the footsteps of Calvin, only expressing still more distinctly his aristocratic principle. In older times the foundation of the state had been democratic.

From the following historical notices we may form a clear idea of the political constitution of Geneva, and of the influence exercised on it by the reformation.

Before the war of freedom with the house of Savoy, the general assembly of citizens (Conseil Général) was composed of all the citizens and inhabitants who possessed a house in the city. After that period the citizens only, having attained their majority, were admitted. In this assembly existed the whole power of

\* T. i. p. 392.

† Beranger, t. i. p. 302.

‡ Thorel, ii. 261.

§ Senebier. Hist. Lit. i. p. 343. Colladon was born at Berry, was a doctor of laws, and received the citizenship in 1555. He was a great jurisconsult.



the state: everything was determined by its decision; no treaty could be formed, no law adopted without its approbation. It usually met in the cathedral of St. Peter, summoned by the solemn tolling of the great bell, while its meetings were announced at all corners of the city by criers and the sound of trumpets. The syndics, who were the judges in all criminal causes, and before whom the prince himself and all the members of the council took the oath, "that they would defend the freedom and the laws of the land," had no authority or power but as ministers of the general council of citizens. John of Savoy, during his tyrannical rule, had forbidden young unmarried men to take part in its proceedings, but he was never able to abridge the rights of this assembly. It was here that the democratic principle of the state declared itself. The syndics and the finance chamber were elected by it yearly. The syndics continued one year in office, but might be re-elected. During the war of freedom it was determined that they could only be re-elected after four years, and this regulation continued till the last revolution. They may now return to office after one year. In early times the syndics themselves chose their own council, consisting of sixteen members. After the war of freedom, the members of the syndic going out of office, continued in the lesser council, and with the four new syndics and the treasurer (at first chosen for life, afterwards for five years), formed this lesser council, consisting of twenty-five members, but at one time of thirty. It possessed the legislative, judicial, and executive power. Thus the democratic form was changed into the aristocratic. In the year 1457 the council of fifty or sixty was already called into being, in order to avoid the crowded meetings of the general council, which frequently exhibited a scene of violence and confusion. These fifty or sixty members were for a long time chosen by the syndics, who summoned sometimes one and sometimes another, almost without distinction, when and as often as they pleased. After the league with Freiburg and Bern, which had a council of two hundred, a council of the same number was desired. The lesser council elected this, and it was only to assemble at its command, which was the case with that of the sixty. But every one had the right to claim the summons for an especial occasion, if he would bear the cost of the meeting, that is, at the rate of a sol (a franc in present money) for each member.

Calvin now appeared. The reformer desired to put down the

spirit of insurrection, to establish peace, not despotism; and in the year 1555 he succeeded in limiting the freedom of the state, so that his opponents might not have it always in their power to summon the council, which possessed so great, so almost irresistible an influence. His name indeed is not mentioned in the report of the proceedings, but nothing whatever was attempted at this period without his being consulted. This limiting of their freedom made him especially hated by the opposite party. It was now treated as a high misdemeanor if any one required the meeting of the great council of the citizens, a disturbance being expected as the consequence. The tendency of Calvin went so far as to favor, when possible, the organization of an oligarchy; and in this he succeeded. The general assembly was now convened only twice in the year; in February to choose the syndics, and in November to nominate the *lieutenant* and the *auditors*, who had superseded the vice-domini in regulating and determining the price of wine. It was now also commanded, that nothing should be proposed in the general assembly which had not been previously considered in the council of two hundred, and nothing in the latter which had not been brought before the council of sixty; nor in the latter, which had not been examined and approved by the lesser council. In this assembly there were eight members, who had not been replaced in the course of the year, namely, the four old and the four new syndics. Hence the power became gradually concentrated in this body, the other sixteen members being chosen by the two hundred, who had themselves been nominated by the lesser council, and to whom this furnished a list of thirty names, out of which the sixteen were to be selected. This was only for the current year; but it could scarcely fail that the most influential party would again choose a large number of their followers. The power of the state therefore lay peculiarly in the lesser council. It was constantly in activity, and held four regular sittings in the week, while the other councils assembled only for extraordinary business. It had the nomination to almost all the great offices of the state, except that of the syndics, of the general procurator, the lieutenant, and some others. For these it selected only two candidates; the council of two hundred revised this selection, and the general council did the same. The votes were given to the two state-secretaries in secret. When the general council accepted one of the candidates, the choice was confirmed; if it rejected both, the whole process had to be

begun afresh, so that no one could obtain these offices without having a majority of the people in his favor. The general council, to choose four syndics, had only eight candidates from whom to select; of these, two were chosen from the lower and two from the higher classes of the city. If it rejected the list, a new one was presented; and it stood opposed to those who resisted its sovereignty, and must in the end fulfil the will of the lesser council, or an insurrection was the consequence. Thus, at last, the great families retained the chief power in their hands. The syndics, with the council, had the right of passing sentence of death in the processes over which they presided. As presidents of the council, they had the whole public business under their management, and possessed at the same time the power of the executive. Hence the earlier spiritual and wealthy aristocracy was changed into that of the citizens.

It may appear strange that Calvin did not undertake the second revision of the laws; but it seems that a certain degree of jealousy, on the part of the magistrates, prevented their entrusting him again with so important a matter, not only because he was a foreigner, but because of the religious power which he possessed. The task was therefore entrusted to Germain Colladon, although he too was a stranger. But as Calvin was on very intimate terms with Colladon, who entertained the most devoted regard for him, he still continued to exercise an indirect influence on the legislation. If Calvin therefore considered a new law necessary, he appeared before the council and demanded it in the name of the consistory; and this was granted whenever any of the members of the assembly were of his opinion or party. A great many remarkable documents show, that Calvin thoroughly examined not only the higher spheres of Genevese legislation, but penetrated even to its minutest peculiarities. We read with astonishment essays, in his hand-writing, on questions of pure administration, on all kinds of matters of police, and on the modes of protection from fire; as well as on legal proceedings, instructions for the inspector of buildings, for the artillery superintendent, and the keepers of the watch-towers; all which shows that, to powerful minds, the little is, in its place, as important and necessary as the great; because that all things are equally little and equally great in their presence, as before the eye of God.\*

We recognize in Calvin's legislation the majesty, the earnest-

\* Bretschneider. J. Calvini Lit. quædam, pp. 69-99.

ness and strictness of his mind, the qualities which God glorifies in his own holy severity as the judge of the wicked. He had the honor of God, and not merely the security of man, in view. The spirit which guided him, and the principle which lay nearest his heart, are found expressed in a letter to Somerset, the regent of England, to whom, in 1546, he tendered instructions, in the highest degree characteristic, respecting the Christian government of a kingdom. The right of punishment established by the old covenant, which everywhere threatened the stiff-necked people with death, proclaiming thereby the anger and righteousness of God, is constantly apparent in the statements of Calvin.

With him, as with Moses, the spiritual members of the state were judges; both were zealous for the honor of God. As with Moses idolatry, so now was blasphemy punished with death. As the law of Moses recognizes no peculiar crime as treason against the state, which however must probably occur in the existence of a nation; so with Calvin, in the same way, it is marked as treason against God. To curse, or to strike a parent, is punished in both systems with death; theft in both is punished with loss of freedom only; unchastity is treated severely in both, and the penalty of adultery is death. There is no mention of suicide in Moses; with Calvin it is followed by infamy. The greatest with Moses is stoning to death, with Calvin burning to death. With Moses the dead body only of the criminal was burnt. Both employed disgrace as a punishment; but infamy or banishment does not occur in the Mosaic law. The later Jews only knew three kinds of banishment.

There is even reason to believe that Calvin, as soon as he obtained increased authority, endeavored to sharpen by degrees the severity of the earlier laws, which had been received by the state; that they retained their original form till about the year 1560, but were, after his death, thoroughly imbued with his sterner principles. Several cases of punishment illustrate this statement. Edicts exist, drawn up by him in 1556, "*Sur les paillardises, adultères, blasphèmes, juremens et déspitemens de Dieu*;" but the council of two hundred found them too severe, and decided (November 15th) that, because they seemed too rude to some, they should be moderated and revised, and *après estre présentés en général*.

The overthrow of the libertines had given power to the consistory, and offenders could now be punished with more success than formerly. Adultery, which, before Calvin's return, was



punished only by an imprisonment of some days, or by a trifling fine, was now punished with death. An adulteress was drowned in the Rhone. Thus two citizens of the best families (Heinrich Philip and Jacques le Neveu) were beheaded. A remarkable fact is mentioned in the trial of the former, descriptive of the spirit of the times. This citizen had kept in his house for fifteen years a figure painted on glass, which he called his household god, and through which he boasted to be able to discover any infidelity on the part of his wife. He preserved this figure, notwithstanding the command which he had received from the council and the consistory to destroy it. This fact seemed very weighty to the judges, and contributed greatly to bring Philip to the scaffold.\*

Viewed according to the principles of the reformer, the grounds of this great severity in legislation may be found partly in the sternness of the notions then prevailing, partly in the depravity of that class of the people which opposed itself to all religion and order; and further, in the position of the little republic, which, being surrounded by larger states, whose constant effort it was to excite insurrections in the city, had daily occasion to institute the hottest prosecution of the supposed traitors. In the year 1539, for example, it was resolved that every senator who made known the secret proceedings of the council should lose his head. The council of the two hundred however ordered that he should only have his tongue bored through. The kinds of punishment employed bear the stamp of the century: the blazing pile, the rack, tearing the flesh with red-hot pincers, and strangling, were the most usual instruments or modes of torture.

All traces of the old religion, wherever discovered, were instantly abolished. The preachers kept a watchful eye on families, and proved the people as to their opinions and belief, not allowing them to approach the Lord's Supper without first obtaining permission. But if a man, not forbidden to partake of the sacrament, neglected to receive it, he was condemned to banishment for a year. In 1564 a man was condemned to do penance openly, because he had not come to the Lord's Supper at Whitsuntide; and his son shared the punishment, because both had neglected to attend afternoon service. In the year 1561 the command was issued by the consistory, that no one should remain three days in bed from sickness without giving

\* Spon. t. i. p. 305.

notice to the minister of his quarter, that he might receive admonition and comfort—then, it is said, more necessary than ever. Sermons were frequent and very much desired: family worship was also observed with the greatest regularity. According to a military order of the year 1589, the garrison was to attend prayers twice a-day, and this praiseworthy custom was kept up till the end of the last century. At every gate of the city a soldier kneeled down before the portal was closed at night, and before it was opened in the morning, and repeated a prayer with a loud voice. According to a state-protocol, three children were punished because, during the sermon, instead of going into church they remained outside to eat cakes. Idle talk and conduct, such as was contrary to good manners, or injured at all the moral feeling, were severely chastised. Galiffe states, by way of mockery, that whilst the preachers used hard, rude sayings in their sermons, the consistory desired that the peasants should use court language to their children; and that a countryman was once brought to trial because he had cursed his beast. The judges punished not only blasphemy, but such expressions as intimated even indirectly any disrespect towards God. In the year 1568 a mason was put in prison three days, because while falling from a building he had exclaimed, "This must be the devil's way, and so too my master and the work which he set me." Those also were punished as blasphemers who said hard things against the refugees, because, being spoken against martyrs, they were considered as spoken against God.

There is great beauty in the earnestness with which the authority of parents was defended. In the year 1563 a young girl who had insulted her mother was kept confined, fed on bread and water, and obliged to express her repentance publicly in the church. A peasant boy who had called his mother a devil, and flung a stone at her, was publicly whipt, and suspended by his arms to a gallows as a sign that he deserved death, and was only spared on account of his youth. Another child in 1568, for having struck his parents was beheaded. A lad of sixteen, for having only threatened to strike his mother, was condemned to death; on account of his youth the sentence was softened, and he was only banished, after being publicly whipped, with a halter about his neck. The stern legislator desired that children should be brought up in the strictest manner, but at the same time instructors were forbidden to employ undue severity; and one of them in 1563, that is, in Calvin's

life-time, was degraded and condemned to perform penance, because he had broken out the tooth of one of his pupils.

The military ordinance before alluded to declares that rape and the double crime of adultery should be punished with loss of life: simple adultery was to be punished with the iron-collar; witchcraft with only nineteen days' imprisonment; but the states-register names a great number of individuals who were drowned for this species of crime. In the year 1543 a young female singer was banished for a year and a day; the man who shared her guilt was only imprisoned three days; this distinction in the treatment of the man and the woman is met with continually; the latter was subjected to the severe infliction of banishment, because she sang worldly, licentious songs. In the year 1565 another was scourged, because she sang common songs to psalm tunes. In 1576 the consistory excommunicated a young woman because she had dressed herself in man's attire; her mother was subjected to the same punishment, because she had permitted the girl thus to disguise herself. In the year 1579 a gentleman of respectability in the city, was imprisoned twenty-four hours because he had been found reading the Florentine Poggio's narratives: he was compelled publicly to burn the work, denominated in the register as profane and infamous. In the same manner, in 1598, a man was thrown into prison for dressing himself as a woman.

The severity of the legislation thus established is evinced in some of the minuter points of discipline. Brides, for example, were not permitted to wear wreaths in their bonnets, unless of unblemished character. Before the time of Calvin, the laws against luxury and the mode of living among the reformed Genevese indicate the prevalence of great luxury and splendor in the city. This appears from a colloquy by Matthew Cordier, in his description of a most sumptuous feast, at which the four syndics were present. These manners however were altogether changed, and in the second half of the sixteenth century, severity, simplicity and moderation characterized, in an extraordinary degree, the mode of living adopted by the inhabitants. Gamblers were set in the pillory with their cards about their neck: even in 1506 the council had forbidden playing with dice, nine-pins, or cards in the public streets. In the years 1546 and 1556 laws were passed prohibiting the manufacture of cards. The clergy showed themselves still more earnest in this matter than the council: they refused to tolerate many amusements

which the council accounted innocent. In the year 1576 they excommunicated some young people, who on the day of the three holy kings were found playing at a game common to the festival, and one of the simplest among them was persuaded into the belief that his head would be cut off. The council considered that such a punishment would be too severe, and made their representations to the consistory accordingly.

Calvin preserved the laws of the later Roman emperors against heresy; he also retained that which prescribed the punishment of death by fire for witchcraft. There is one circumstance peculiarly interesting, mentioned by the historians of the city in describing the numerous trials for witchcraft, extending up to the year 1652, when the last witch was condemned, and out of mercy was put to death by hanging. In the space of sixty years, according to the public register of the council, one hundred and fifty persons were burnt to death, in the little state of Geneva, on the accusation of witchcraft. Their crime is generally described in the processes as the *crime de lèse majesté divine au plus haut chef*, which throws still greater light upon Calvin's principle, that at least as much zeal ought to be shown for the honor of God as for that of the state. The final abolition of this fanatical judgment of the human mind, awaking as it were out of slumber, took place at Geneva towards the end of the seventeenth century. Wizards do not appear to have been punished with death before the reformation. No example at least of their being so is found in the annals: they were subjected however to a legal prosecution. In the year 1503 the council informed a magician, that if he did not leave the city he should be driven out with cudgels. It was not till after the reformation therefore that the old and severe law, which was in force during the middle ages, was again called into action. Remarkable indeed is it that Calvin, who was kind-hearted, benevolent and tender, and Beza also, had not yet advanced sufficiently to protest against enactments so stern and cruel. This is the more worthy of observation, as in the early part of Calvin's life we discover no peculiar trace of intolerance, and for so strict a reasoner, and for one who complained so much against the intolerance of the Roman catholics, principles of the kind referred to were full of inconsistency.

Calvin left the use of torture as he found it, and as it was then practised in the whole civilized world: it was not however employed in the trials of heretics, as in those of Servetus and Gen-



tilis. The use of torture continued at Geneva for a hundred and fifty years after Calvin's death, but was abolished earlier there than in other states, the council at length, after many efforts, opening its eyes to the enormity. Germain Colladon justified the employment of the greatest severity, and we find that he recommended the torture in the generality of trials. The intention of this practice was probably to avoid sentencing the criminal to death without sufficient evidence; but in those stormy, unsettled times this was too readily done, and falsehood, not truth, was often wrung from the unhappy sufferer. No indication exists of Calvin's wishing to employ the torture, but it is important as illustrative of his position at Geneva, that he was accused of having, by means of the rack, brought some persons guilty of sedition to confess their crime. This slander having reached Zurich, he defended himself against it in a convincing letter to Bullinger (1555). He says however nothing against the legality of the procedure, although the criminals before their execution retracted some portion of the confession which had been wrung from them in their agony.

It is easy to see that the centre point of the new system involved, with the reformation of manners, a most determined hatred against sin and wickedness. Both the council and the consistory acted, in their legal proceedings, with a degree of passion. The tranquil, moderate spirit of Calvin, the influence of which is felt even in these times, obtained its dominion over the people only by slow degrees. In the rivalry between the clergy and the council, especially after Calvin's death, when they strove so anxiously for a stern morality, the power of holiness seems to have been dominant over all. The outward freedom of life was hereby somewhat abridged, but this was disregarded. So far was the city from being avoided, that people flocked to it from all parts; and many sent their children to receive their education there. A vast number of noble spirits unfolded their powers under the stern administration of its laws. This severity, instead of crippling the energy of the mind, promoted it; it being directed solely against vice, the great enemy of man. Neither did it produce disgust, but the profoundest reverence for the majesty of God, in whose name it was practised. What seriousness such a state of the law created—what an earnest spirit it diffused among all classes, is very apparent; and one may rightly affirm that Calvin pursued wickedness with fire and sword; that his laws were written not only in blood,

like those of the Athenian Draco, but with a pen of flame. The man of sound moral feeling loves justice and severity, and a consistent reverential administration of the law is for such a character far more sublime, far more beautiful, than anything which can be suggested by that tame, slumbering spirit of refinement, which would abolish every kind of capital punishment. An intelligent child once said when reading the Old Testament, "It must require great trust in God to put a man to death." This was the profoundest thing that could be uttered respecting capital punishments. And when it is seen how the Genevese legislature, which had a minister of religion for its author, played with life, one cannot help deeply feeling, that trust in God lay at the foundation of it all, and that Calvin's sanguinary principle was grounded in his religion.

The *Theocratic Ideal* unites in intimate harmony the Old and New Testaments, the Decalogue of the Gospel; and it thence became the duty of the reformer to exhibit God's redeeming love and grace, on which the Christian church is supported, in contrast with the consuming fire of the divine holiness: hence he closely blended with the system of legislation the new ecclesiastical polity which we are now about to describe.

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## CHAPTER V.

CALVIN THE FOUNDER OF AN ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTION.—COMMON PRINCIPLES OF REFORM ADOPTED BY HIM.  
—HIS PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

THE church discipline introduced by Calvin can never properly be considered as antiquated, or as possessing only an historical interest: it retains its practical worth in all ages. Calvin's structure is the result of an experiment made by the human mind, to lay a firm foundation for the unity of the church in contrast to catholicism, which could discover no other means than despotism; and to oppose, at the same time, the spirit of schism, with which the protestant principle of freedom had been almost necessarily united. The only available authority in Calvin's eyes was that of the synods, which answered to the ancient

councils. We have never ceased to be told by the old catholic church, that the only alternative is submission to the authority of the papal chair, or the anarchy which follows in the train of rationalism. This has been insisted upon by controversialists with superfluous care, and according to abstract reasoning there seems indeed to be no other choice than that mentioned. But Calvin, on the contrary, shows the possibility of a middle course, according to the pattern of the original church, when the opposition spoken of did not yet exist, but the still uncompleted work contained the most admirable materials and indications, according to which the Christian church might again be raised from the ruins of the fallen edifice. He alone avoided the error which seems to have pervaded the whole protestant church, of casting off the authority of the papal chair only to substitute a new power—the authority, that is, of several or of one. But synods, the union of clergy and laity, take away the difficulty, and afford that measure of the spirit which God grants his church, and whereby the truth is defended at any stated time, and the rudiments of the faith are set forth far more correctly and securely than it can be effected by the decision of a father of the church, or by the pope.

This matter deserves especial consideration in our own times, when the force of circumstances leads us to desire an ecclesiastical rule, in order to oppose, by the holy unity of the church, that division of opinions, which, as in the case of the English and North American states, threatens a total dissolution.

The fundamental principles which the reformer followed out in spirit may be arranged as follows. His edifice was to exhibit, according to the form of the primitive church, a direct contrast to the papacy.

I. The Gospel, and not human laws, forms the central point of power—the living principle. Neither the visible church nor outward works, but the Gospel, and that through faith in Christ, secures man's salvation.

II. The conscience and the understanding of man, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, discover the truth in Scripture, and then are further guided by Scripture, and armed against error and fanaticism. The Holy Ghost is the author of unity in the church, and secures its constant progress under all the various circumstances of the human mind. This is the inward, fundamental principle which stands directly opposed to the catholic rule of despotism and compulsion in matters of religion. In

the last instance, the synods determine the sense of Holy Scripture, and they alone have the right to establish creeds, to change, or abolish them.

III. The outward fundamental principle of opposition to the catholic rule—the mightiest means employed to subdue the pride of the clergy—is the presbyterian form of government, in which Calvin opposed a double number of laymen to the ministers in the assembly, so that the former could always outvote the latter whenever they found it necessary.

IV. The church, mighty through the spirit animating it, must be in the hand of the state. An outward subjection shames it not. The state may inspect the property of the church, but not appropriate it to itself.

V. Lastly, to secure the order of the church, and to render the reform of manners possible, Calvin desired to introduce certain regulations; as, first, laws against free-thinkers and heretics, with the design of establishing unity and defending the principles of the reformation,—a precaution rendered necessary by the present condition of affairs; and secondly, a watchful discipline, which might oppose every species of immorality,—a system of spiritual instruction, a code of morals, and therewith the means of compelling obedience.

Calvin's whole plan of reformation is to be considered according to these simple principles. The Gospel, and not the pope, brings salvation and the inner life. The presbyterian form of government secures the outward life, and gives the outward form.

We will now examine this form under the following particulars :—

I. Calvin's principles of church discipline, according to the first and last propositions of the 'Institutes.'

II. How the church in Geneva was established with slight variations from his principle.

III. Criticism of the principles which he followed in the constitution of the church at Geneva.

IV. Perfected improvement of the presbyterian constitution in the French reformed church.

V. Views of the Lutheran church in respect to the church and discipline. The consistorial form.

VI. Calvin was not opposed to the episcopal form.

The direction which Calvin took as a reformer in matters of discipline, was that pointed out by Zwingli, and the opposite of



that pursued by Luther. The latter, from his fondness for the old customs, willingly allowed that to remain which could in any way be brought to consort with the doctrine of justification by faith, the most important of all things in the eyes of this reformer. He abolished only that which was palpably erroneous or superstitious, and would readily have retained the old form of government; even the papacy itself, if it would have admitted of reform. Calvin, on the other hand, went much further. Like Zwingli, he proceeded with an inquiring and critical spirit. With him Scripture alone had authority. Neither traditions nor observances, however authorized by custom, were spared: unless they could stand the proof, they fell beneath the sword of God's Word. Thus the great simplicity of the form of worship, and the plain administration of the Lord's Supper. He would have no holidays, and tolerated nothing which is not found mentioned in Scripture as belonging to the discipline of the primitive church. Zwingli, who had adopted the same principles before him, took a similar course, but his church polity was far from being so characteristic, and he had consequently less power over the minds of the people. Calvin accordingly never cites him in the account of his own ideas.

Zwingli's sketch of his church polity appeared in 1532, in the preachers' ordinance of the superintendent Bullinger, at Zurich. It was laid before a synod consisting of pastors, preachers, and two representatives of the congregation. The subjects considered were, first, the choice, appointment and ordination of ministers; secondly, their doctrine and life; and thirdly, the assembling of synods. In these were involved the principles of the still existing, but now further developed, constitution of the church at Zurich.

The synod, summoned by the government, assembled twice in the year, under the conduct of two presidents, one of whom was chosen from among the preachers out of the lesser and greater council; the other from the lesser council only. All the members of the synod were preachers, and including the lay presidents, there were eight representatives of the government. Representatives of the congregation are no longer known. The protocols are issued by the court.

The church is subject to the state, but the advice of the synod, which frequently carries on its deliberations in the presence of members of the government, has often exercised its influence upon the latter, even in political affairs. Every individual mem-

ber of the church had also a certain degree of influence on its affairs through this, that the congregation was allowed to express its opinion respecting the chosen preachers. In the year 1526 a foundation was laid, through the marriage ordinance, for the stability of the church. According to this decree, from two to four pious men were allowed to every minister as assistants. They were to see that the laws of marriage were strictly observed, to warn the quarrelsome and litigious, and in case of necessity to consign such persons to the magistrate to be punished. This regulation prevailed in the towns as well as in the country. Thence arose the establishment of officers, to whom was entrusted the oversight of morals and church discipline. These persons were even allowed to inflict a certain measure of punishment, when warnings and admonitions did not avail, by exacting fines, imposing penances more or less degrading, and even by excluding the offender from the Lord's table. The right to inflict this last mode of punishment, however, it was soon found proper to restrict to the superior officers.

Calvin's mind was settled at the very commencement of his course, as to the resolution of the collective questions on discipline. He had adopted, and he followed out the simple principle, "that the Scriptures and the primitive church must decide." For the church he claimed a holy authority, given it by God, and embracing the power of the keys and the right of excommunication, which could be denied it only by the enemies of truth. "Let us but contend," he says,\* "with united forces and invincible zeal for that sacred power, which must be unassailable, and the Lord Jesus Christ will destroy every gainsayer with the breath of his mouth." He wished this power to exist in an aristocratic form; and that he was the first from whom the idea of the pure presbyterian constitution sprung, the influence of which, through the living spirit which diffused it, has wrought so mightily on the whole history of the church, appears plainly from the following facts. Zwingli, though he adopted the principle of equality among the clergy, and all important church affairs, in the reformed cantons, were settled in the synod, the laity also being admitted into the under-consistory (Kirchenstillstande), yet introduced no deputies of the several communities into the synod. The under-consistory was occupied chiefly with circumstances arising out of the marriage laws, and

\* Ep. 54 ad Myconium.

soon became an assembly of public officers. Zwingli moreover never gave these <sup>\*</sup>laymen the character of presbyters, who were appointed to exercise an especial oversight of all the members of the church, of the clergy as well as the laity, and were accordingly like bishops. Nothing of this kind, before the time of Calvin, was known at Strasburg. He labored with great earnestness to establish a system of discipline in that city, but his exertions produced little effect. No trace of such an institution existed in Geneva at an earlier period. Farel, who was then the soul of everything, had not attempted to establish a consistory. It is in the year 1537, when Calvin was there, that we meet with the first sign of the union of the clergy and laity. These classes, mention of which is first made in reference to Neufchatel, and which still exist there, did not however constitute an assembly of congregational representatives. Viret, before Calvin's return, urged the establishment of a consistory in 1541, but probably in conformity with Calvin's own ideas and wishes. Calvin, on the other hand, as early as the year 1535, declared his sentiments on the subject in the 'Institutes,' and expressed his wish that preachers, bishops and elders were chosen according to Scripture. He distinguishes them from the apostles, sets them by their side, and thus abolishes the catholic invention of a priestly order. He allows that, according to Scripture, it belongs to the bishops and elders to administer the Word and sacraments, as it belonged to the apostles to make them known. Thus he has rightly adjudged the Word to the elders as spiritual teachers. In his later investigations, he made a distinction between the teaching and the ministering presbyters, departing here in some respect from the Gospel. He also, it is to be regretted, affords no room for travelling teachers, apostles, or missionaries. Such might visit however other churches in any fixed place, and according to a prescribed rule, as teachers or helps. Thus Paul writes to Titus,\* "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city." Luke illustrates the same fact in the Acts of the Apostles, when he introduces Paul thus addressing the elders of the church at Ephesus: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, and to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased

\* Chap. i. 5.

with his own blood." \* In the same manner Paul speaks of Archippus, bishop of the Colossians, and of a bishop of the Philippians.†

"If," continues Calvin, "we rightly comprehend these expressions, it will be easy to understand what were the functions of the presbyters. I call bishops and presbyters, without distinction, servants of the church. We must now show in what their calling consisted, who appointed the bishops and elders, and with what ceremonies it took place. The calling of the apostles cannot be adduced as an example, for they were chosen not by men, but by the Lord. Nor is it clearly enough understood what rule the apostles followed. Paul, in the passage above-quoted, merely says that he had left Titus in Crete to ordain bishops in every city; and he elsewhere warns Timothy, 'to lay hands suddenly on no man; while Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, says that Paul and Barnabas ordained elders in all the churches of Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. The papists use these statements, and assert that they alone have the right to consecrate bishops; but by consecration they mean priestly consecration, and not simply the right to appoint some one as a preacher of the Word. The Scriptures however recognize no other servants of God but the preachers of the Word, called to govern the church, and whom they sometimes name bishops, sometimes elders or pastors.‡ I also think that the apostles gave these men to the churches, according to their own good opinion of them, and without the knowledge or will of the churches themselves; but having taken counsel with the community, they chose such as were best reputed for life and doctrine."§ Again: "The congregations were allowed a voice, and necessarily so, if churches existed possessing the right of judgment, so that as often as a minister was to be chosen, they might summon one or two bishops distinguished for holiness of life and doctrine, in order to consult with them respecting the persons fittest to be chosen. But whether it is better to elect the bishop by the voices of all the members of the congregation, or only by those of a few, or by the advice of the magistrate, cannot be determined by law. We must be guided in this respect by times and circumstances. Cyprian strongly urged, that the election is legitimate only when all the members give their assent. History also shows that this rule held good in

\* Acts, xx. 28.

† Acts, xiv. 23; 1 Pet. v.

‡ Colos. iv. 17; Philip. i. 1.

§ Institut.



many places. But as it is scarcely to be expected that so many people would entertain the same feeling, it seems to me desirable that the magistrate, or the counsel, or the elders, should undertake the election; and that certain bishops, known for their rectitude and piety, should be called to their aid."

Hence Calvin, we find, was willing to subject the church to the state, and speaks not of the clergy but of the elders, as taking part in the election. "But this," he adds, "princes and free states, who have the interests of piety at heart, may best determine according to times and circumstances. What ceremonies and forms then shall be observed at the ordination of presbyters or elders? Our Lord breathed upon the apostles, as a symbolic sign of the Holy Ghost which was given them. The papists misuse this sign as well as that of anointing. But the laying on of hands was always practised by the apostles, whenever they consecrated a minister of the church: this usage was borrowed from the Jews, with whom imposition of hands was a sign of blessing. The apostles therefore consecrated the minister of God, when they besought for him the Holy Spirit, in order to show that this came, not from them, but from God's blessing. The appointment of deacons is apostolic, and the apostles laid their hands on them also. In conclusion, we remark, that the power of the church is founded on the Word of God."

We will now trace the course of Calvin's principles, according to the last revision of his 'Institutes;' and consider, 1. The church in its essence; 2. The rights of the church; and 3. The relation of the church to the state.

In the first chapter of the fourth book of the 'Institutes,' Calvin proceeds from the idea of the church, and shows in the first place what it is to believe in the one, the universal, the holy church. We believe in a congregation of the elect, but which is not visible, since the elect are perfectly known to God alone. This church may be called a mother, but the holy Scripture describes it also as that elect body of men who acknowledge God and Christ upon earth, and reverence the sacraments. There being no means by which we may assure ourselves of the faith of any member of the church, the Lord has instituted a certain test of Christian love, according to which we recognize all as brethren, who, through their confession of faith, example, good life, and participation of the sacraments, glorify with us the same God and Christ. There must be a

general agreement in fundamental doctrines, as, that there is one God; that Christ is the Son of God and God himself, and that our salvation is founded on his mercy. But in unimportant matters differences may be allowed to prevail, without rendering separation necessary, even though those differences should relate to the manner in which the sacraments are to be administered. Moral infirmities are also not properly a cause of separation; and Donatists, Cathari, or Puritans, as Anabaptists also, ought almost to be considered as madmen. It is also allowable to partake of the Lord's Supper with the unworthy, it being every one's duty to look simply into his own heart. We should regard the church as our mother, and remain in it till we lay aside the body, and become like the angels. Our weakness prohibits our ever leaving this school, and we must continue scholars as long as we remain upon the earth.

God has given us two signs whereby to discover the visible church, for where the Word of the Lord is purely preached, and the sacraments are honored, there is the church. According to Matthew,\* wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, the Lord will be present.

In the second chapter, Calvin contrasts the true with the false church. Where falsehood and fraud prevail, there can be no church; this is the condition of the papistical: where the Word of God is not, there is no congregation. He here attacks the papal government with great force and clearness of thought, and shows by familiar arguments that the pope cannot constitute unity; but that, on the contrary, he is Antichrist, deceitful, unholy. Among others he advances the following ideas: "The papists build upon the long line of Peter's successors, which however is altogether without weight, since where Christ has been forsaken there can be no right to call us schismatics. Still we do not assert that the church is wholly lost under the papacy."

The third chapter treats of doctors and preachers, of their election and office. Christ has set apostles, prophets, evangelists, preachers and doctors, in his church: the last two are for all times; for the rest, there are bishops, priests or elders; preachers and ministers have, according to Scripture, the same office. All who preach the Word are bishops. The elders of the church, who are chosen with the bishops, superintend the government of the church, and the exercise of censure and dis-

\* Chap. xviii. 20.

cipline. Hence every church had, at the beginning, a kind of senate, which had authority to punish offences. The deacons took care of the poor; some, according to St. Paul, distributing the alms, and others attending to the sick. But in the Epistles to the Romans and Corinthians he speaks of other offices, which had no reference to the performance of these duties among the poor.\*

With regard to the call to the ministry, there is an inner, as in that of St. Paul, and an outer: both are necessary for every minister. The clergy ought to conduct the election in union with the people. Paul and Barnabas set forth elders, but the people by lifting up of hands indicated their approval of the choice,† according to the custom of the Greeks.

Calvin's doctrine of the church is, on the whole, that of the Lutheran church, differing essentially from it only through the principle of Presbyterianism, according to which it is denied that the community of the faithful is represented by the clergy only. Thus the power of excommunication was confined, at first, in the Lutheran church, to the clergy, and afterwards to the consistory. Calvin never did this, but gave the right to the congregation consisting of both laity and clergy, which represented as a body the whole community.

According to the principles on which the constitution of his church was founded, Calvin asserted the following claims in its favor:—1. The church has before all the right to teach. The exposition of Scripture pertains to the synod. Scripture decides, and the interpretation of Scripture belongs to the councils: hence we adopt the decisions of many councils, in which the Holy Ghost was present. Truth ever lives in the church: there, consequently, we find it in a definite form. But every council is not holy, for the Holy Ghost may not be present; and thence it is that we reject all the Roman catholic errors, although established on the decision of councils, because they are manifestly opposed to holy Scripture; as for example, the denial of the cup to the laity, and the prohibition of marriage to the clergy. Preachers must not proclaim their own doctrines, but only the Word of God. Councils establish unity of doctrine in opposition to heresy. The discipline of the French church therefore, following out this principle, allows the general synod only to alter the confession of faith.

Pastors are bishops, and have the right of administering the

\* Rom. xii. 7; 1 Cor. xii. 28.

† Acts, xiv. 23.

holy mysteries; they govern the church: their office as pastors embraces the duty of admonition and of the administration of the sacraments. Some noble remarks are inserted in this part of the 'Institutes,' respecting the duty of the clergy in difficult circumstances, and the honor due to the office: "The Lord," he says, "declares to all, whom He has placed as watchmen in his church, that if a soul be lost through their sin, He will require its life at their hands." The right of election pertains to the congregation, but under the guidance of the clergy. The latter cannot choose others to share their ministry without the approbation of the people and the superintendents, but neither can the superintendents elect ministers without the consent of the clergy, nor exercise the power of deprivation without the consent of the congregation.

2. In the next place, the church has the right to determine church ordinances; to settle the order of divine service and ceremonies, according to Scripture, and therefore to abolish catholic usages. But the church has not the right to oppress the conscience by its laws; God's Word stands higher than all. The conscience of man is superior both to civil and to church law. The Lord is our only lawgiver. Some remarks are here added on the external worship of God. Ceremonies cannot be dispensed with in the church, but only for the sake of order.

The great simplicity of the reformed service is not to be attributed to Calvin only: he found it already existing, but he improved and confirmed it. He is commonly accused of forgetting, through his own intellectual character, the wants of the human heart; it not being borne in mind that Zwingli had some time before introduced a still severer simplicity, but deserved as little as Calvin the accusation of Maimburg, that "he left only the skeleton of religion remaining." Far from this, the Christian religion appears in all its forms sublime and vital to the vital Christian. Farel, who had the ardent feelings of the south, introduced the same simplicity into Geneva. Even Luther warned people against "groanings and tonings, and boastful ornaments."\* Calvin expresses his love of simplicity in one of the letters to Farel, already quoted, where he says, "I told Melancthon to his face that I was displeased with the multiplicity of ceremonies which Luther suffered to exist. But Melancthon answered, that it was necessary in Saxony to yield somewhat to the canonists; and that Luther himself liked the

\* Bretschneider's Ref. Alm. p. 93.



ceremonies which they were obliged to retain, as little as he did the flatness of the Swiss churches."

But Luther was not, like Calvin, surrounded by catholics, or by people of the south, so inclined to depend upon outward and superstitious practices. Calvin's polemical writings, in which he attacks those who thought it lawful to attend mass while they were evangelical in heart, are well known. The *De Vitandis Superstitionibus* has been already quoted. Some others were against the Nicomedites; and there is also the excellent work, *De Vera Ecclesiæ Reformandæ Ratione*. His polemical essays were especially directed against the Roman catholic error, that true piety consists in the observance of outward forms. This death-inflicting principle he sought to uproot, and replace by one imbued with vitality. He clearly saw however that a settled form of worship was necessary as a bond of union. In the 'Institutes,' in which he explains his sentiments on this subject, he speaks rightly of the papacy as a species of Judaism. He would probably however have readily allowed a significant, noble ceremonial, in other times and under other circumstances.

3. In the eleventh chapter Calvin treats of the jurisdiction of the church. It is a spiritual government and order, having the same relation to the spiritual, which the state has to the temporal, constitution, and taking no part therefore in worldly affairs. The power of the keys has been given to the church, and this is indicated by its right to teach and to preach, to proclaim forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life, and to excommunicate. The church binds and looses by means of discipline: its jurisdiction consequently is not that of the sword; it must employ no kind of temporal punishment, and we accordingly find that the bishops of the early church never exercised their authority by inflicting imprisonment, fines, or other such punishments, but only by admonishing according to God's Word. Censures were never to proceed from an individual, but from a lawful assembly.\* The church recognizes no other kind of punishment than exclusion from the Lord's Supper, which is to be understood only in the apostolical, and not in the papistical, sense, and is not to be attended by either death or imprisonment. Without the right of excommunication, the church could not preserve its purity, but it is not with worldly force the sinner is to be constrained; excommunication is a spiritual punishment.

\* Ep. ad Liser. 167.

It is worthy of observation, in the history of the church, that the same reformers who continually protested against the merit of works, and ascribed all to the grace of God, insisted most strongly upon the necessity of holiness of life. Luther also argued in favor of discipline and excommunication, but he had reasons, as we shall see, for not introducing them. He acknowledges that the Bohemian brothers far surpassed him in this respect, and before his death had the sorrow to see licentiousness prevailing in his church, without any means of repressing it. Calvin too praises the Bohemian brethren. *Ecolampadius* was the first and the only reformer before Calvin, who opposed, in Basel, the influence of gross errors by excommunication; but the other preachers in that city, and *Zwingli* especially, refused to recognize the practice, because the church was sufficiently protected, they considered, by a government consisting of faithful men.

Calvin describes his views as to the object of excommunication in the following excellent manner, in the twelfth chapter of the fourth book of the 'Institutes':—

"No family can exist without order, much less the church. As the doctrine of Christ is the soul of the church, so is discipline the nerves which bind the members together, and preserve each in its proper place. What would be the consequence if every one might live as he pleased, without censure? Discipline is either a bridle or a spur, or a father's rod. The foundation-stone of all discipline is admonition, and this is the business of the preachers and elders. If any one refuses to take heed to such admonition, given for the second time, and before three witnesses, he is then, according to the command of Jesus, to be consigned to the power of the church,\* in order to be publicly warned and corrected. If this produce no effect, he is then to be put out of the church, and separated from the communion of the faithful. But if any crime has been committed, then stronger measures must be employed, as Paul excommunicated the offender according to God's command.† Place however may be allowed for repentance.‡ Order must be preserved in the church by severity: neglect of punishment destroys it. Augustine indeed has said nothing about a public excommunication, but this may be accounted for by the fanaticism which then prevailed in Africa, and threatened to overwhelm the church.

\* Matt. xviii. 15-17.

† Matt. xvi. 19.

‡ 1 Cor. v. 4.

He wished to correct the evil by gentle means.\* When the people however profane the sacraments, the clergy must proceed with the greatest severity. The grand object of discipline is to preserve the Lord's Supper from profanation. Chrysostom re-  
 V improves the priests who were unwilling to keep the rich, though offenders, from the holy table. 'This blood,' he says, 'will be required at your hands. If you fear men, God will make a mock of you; whereas if you fear God, even men will honor you. Kings terrify me not. We have here a mightier power. I would rather consign my body to death, and let my blood be poured out, than suffer such a misunion.' The other end of excommunication is, that the good should not be destroyed with the wicked; the third, that the wicked should be moved to repentance. In the primitive church even the emperors subjected themselves to the corrective voice of the church.

"Excommunication existed from the beginning, and so long as it was in use afforded a trace of the original government of the church. When any had given cause of offence, he was commanded to abstain from the sacrament, to humble himself before God, and to give proof of his repentance. Certain solemn ceremonies were deemed necessary as signs of his restoration. He was received back into the church by laying on of hands, which Cyprian calls, 'the peace of the church.' The bishop and the clergy reconciled the sinner to the church, but not without the consent of the people, or of the whole community.

"Theodosius, when excommunicated by Ambrose because he had shed innocent blood at Thessalonica, laid aside all his imperial ornaments, and lamented his sin openly in the presence of the whole church; and although he had been betrayed into committing the offence by the deceitful advice of some wicked men, yet he prayed for forgiveness with many sighs and tears. Great kings must humble themselves before the Lord Christ, the King of kings, and are not to consider it evil if the church judge them. They hear only that which flatters them in their palaces; it is therefore the more necessary for them than for others to be admonished of God, by the mouth of his ministers. Yea, they must even wish the preachers not to spare them, that they may be spared by God. 'What is more honorable,' said Ambrose to the emperor, 'than to be called a son of the church? A good emperor lives in the church, not above the church.'

"Excommunication is proper, if it take place according to St.

\* Epis. 381.

Paul's rule, by which it is inflicted, not by the presbyters only, but with the knowledge and consent of the people, yet not so as to make them masters of the proceeding, but witnesses, taking heed that nothing be done in wrath. The forms followed must naturally be earnest and solemn, that every one may know that Christ is present.

"It is necessary however that the severity of the church should be always tempered with mildness, lest, as the apostle says, the person punished 'should be swallowed up with over-much sorrow.'\* Were this precaution not attended to, the medicine might be turned into poison, and no true repentance would be produced. No excuse can be offered for the excessive severity of the ancient church, which, while it was contrary to the command of Christ, was full of peril to the offender. The time of his exclusion from the communion extended from three to seven years, and in some cases to the end of life. What could result therefrom but gross hypocrisy or absolute despair? So also, that the offender who had again fallen, after repentance, should never be re-admitted into the church, was neither useful nor reasonable. Any one who properly considers the subject will allow, that in this respect the early discipline was wanting ✓ in wisdom. I rather blame the system itself than those who were concerned about it, many of them not approving of such severity. Cyprian declares that it was not by his own inclination he acted so sternly. 'Our long-suffering, our patience and clemency, are proffered to all who are prepared to acknowledge them. I should wish all to return to the church; I should wish all our comrades to return to the camp of Christ; I am ready to pardon many failings, even those committed against God; and I almost sin myself by forgiving sins more easily than I ought. I affectionately embrace all who come to me with true repentance, and humbly acknowledge all their offences.' Chrysostom, though more severe, says, 'God being so merciful, how dare his servant be so stern?' We know also how mildly Augustine proceeded against the Donatists, and that he even procured for some, whose repentance was deep and apparent, the episcopal dignity.

"The excommunicated ought not to be regarded as lost, but should be prayed for by the faithful. Never ought those to be judged as deserving of eternal death, who are still in the hands of God. When Christ says, that what we bind on earth shall



be bound in heaven, it is clear that He limits our authority in respect to church censures, by which the excommunicated are not to be consigned to eternal death, but only to be warned that eternal condemnation awaits them unless they repent. A great difference exists between excommunication and anathema: the latter should rarely, if ever, be pronounced; it takes from a man all hopes of forgiveness, and gives him up to Satan. But exclusion from the Lord's table affects his character and state, rather than his person; and even though he should himself be punished, yet while his condemnation is pronounced, the way to eternal life is still set before him. And though we are cautioned against having much intercourse with the excommunicated, yet ought we, by our admonitions, gentleness and prayers, to seek in every way to bring them back to holiness. If we fail to use forbearance, there is reason to fear that we may convert discipline into torture, and instead of being censors may become savage executioners.

"Augustine remarks, that preachers, if they cannot correct all that is bad, must not on that account separate themselves from the church. 'True piety, in its endeavors to preserve order in the church, will establish itself on the unity of the spirit, in the bond of peace.' This is what the apostle urged;\* and if another course be taken to employ punishment as a means of good, it is not only superfluous but dangerous, and therefore no more a means. Let a man consider this carefully, and he will never fail to employ the proper severities of discipline, while at the same time he will preserve the unity of the church, and not allow the bond of peace to be broken by censures carried to excess. Let us recollect the words of the Lord, in which he warns us to take heed, lest while we pluck up the tares we root up the wheat also."†

4. Calvin again assigns to the state its proper rights, and subjects even the church to its power. Far from opposing himself to civil government, he insists, that the influence of the clergy upon public morals ought to be directed to its support. As there are two species of government among men, the one for the soul and eternal life, the other for the outward man, so must there also be two kinds of government in the world, a spiritual and a civil, which ought never to be confounded. Outward servitude inflicts no shame whatever on Christian freedom. The church should develop itself in harmony with the state. The political

\* Ephes. iv. 2, 3.

† Matt. xiii. 22.

administration exists only for the defence of the church, and is as necessary for the support of human weakness as bread, water, the air or the sun. But it is not instituted for the purpose only of defending outward interests, the freedom and fortunes of mankind, but also to prevent idolatry, sacrilege, and offences from taking root among the people. The civil power however has not the right to give laws concerning religion and divine worship, but is to take care that the true religion, as revealed in the Gospel, is neither insulted nor injured. The first duty of a government is to uphold the faith and to defend the laws of the two tables, but it is only to punish the wicked and protect the good that power is given it. Calvin denies the right of governments, or princes, to interfere with matters purely ecclesiastical. As no worldly power belongs to the church,—for “my kingdom is not of this world,” says the Lord,—so no spiritual power belongs to princes: they are both too distinct to be united in one person, even under a theocracy. Moses resigned the priesthood to Aaron, and the union of the two did not exist in the primitive church: still less is it proper for princes to interfere with doctrine. In this Calvin agrees with Luther.

There are three forms of government, the monarchical, aristocratical, and democratical. All three forms are good. Calvin however chose the second, and asserted that an aristocracy afforded the surest means of rendering a state happy, the power of individuals being limited by the laws. The perverseness and folly of mankind, he thought, rendered an aristocracy in which many govern, the safest and most tolerable, since while there are mutual warnings and helps, so if one strives to exalt himself above another, the rest discourage his ambition, and become his masters and judges. Experience has always proved this, and God himself gave his people an aristocratic form of government, when intending to preserve them in happiness and security till the reign of David. “I praise those,” adds Calvin, “who can live contented under such a government, and they ought to be supported as much as possible. It is also the duty of magistrates to defend freedom by every means in their power, and being negligent thereof, they ought to be accounted traitors. But if those who live under the government of a king suppose that it is lawful to create insurrections, they are chargeable both with folly and wickedness.” He further expresses himself, and that constantly, against every species of resistance to lawful authority. Thus he says to the reformers at Aix, that they must

not rise against their persecutors; and in the chapter in which he treats of the clergy, he remarks, that he did not wish to see them, if imprisoned for the faith, striving to procure their liberty.

“If we survey the whole world, we shall see that all these various forms of government come from God, and have been established by his especial providence. As the elements are kept in action only through unequal degrees of power and opposition, so is it with the government of states. Private persons must submit to the tyranny of kings, but magistrates ought to defend the rights of the people. In old times there were Ephori, tribunes, Demarchi; and their place is now supplied by the three states when legally assembled. But before all things God must be obeyed rather than man, and governments must submit themselves to his Word.”

Calvin gives a full account of his system of discipline in the eighth chapter, *De Fide*, of the second edition of the ‘Institutes.’ I will endeavor to answer, in some degree, the difficult question, how the temporal state ought to help the church against sinners, or how the rights and relations of the state and the church may be respectively protected. Nothing is said in reference to the punishment of heretics, but the mutual right of the magistrate and the church to punish is plainly acknowledged, “*In corrigendis vitiis mutue debent esse opera*,” but sinners ought not to be given up by the church to the state. The following remarks on the relation of the ecclesiastical to the civil power, from the second edition, are also found almost literally repeated in the last edition of the ‘Institutes’\*—

“The church has not the right of the sword to punish or to restrain: it has not the power to compel, or to inflict imprisonment or other penalties proper to the state. Further, it does not pretend to punish the sinner against his will. Hence arises an altogether different relation, since nothing can properly be assumed by the church which belongs to the state, nor can the state accomplish that which is wrought by the church. This will be rendered clearer by an example: a drunkard in a well-ordered state will be thrown into prison. Some similar or still heavier punishment will attend debauchery. The laws, the state, and the ordinary demands of justice are thus satisfied. But it may happen that the offender afford no sign of repentance; nay, that he even exhibit opposition and defiance. Shall

\* Cap. xi. 3, 4.

the church then yield? Can it allow such men to approach the table of the Lord without doing dishonor to Christ, and inflicting injury on his holy ordinance? As the state must preserve the purity of the church by punishments and other modes of interference, so, on the other hand, must the servant of the Word support the state by suppressing sin; and hence there will be a united effort to the same end, each rendering the other aid, and not increasing its difficulties. And certainly he who gives due weight to the words of Christ, which ascribe a certain power to the church, will easily see that they assign it a constant and durable, and not a mere temporal order: it is not allowed, that is, to commit those who refuse to hear our admonition to the civil power, which must have been the case had it been permitted to take the place of the church. Christ has given no new command in this respect, but confirmed that which had been followed by the old church of his people: hence he showed that it could not dispense with the right of spiritual judgment, which existed from the beginning. And all times have agreed in this; for when the emperors and governments began to give honor to Christ, this right of spiritual judgment was in no case forfeited. Those therefore who, to enrich the state, would deprive the church of this power, not only falsify the meaning of Christ's words, but make all the holy bishops, who were so numerous from the apostolic times, guilty of a great crime,—representing them as assuming the office and authority of rulers under false pretences.”

In order to form some idea of the church government instituted at Geneva, the reader may peruse the following account, which Calvin gives in a letter, of the regulations which had been approved of by the Genevese, and which he recommends to the people of Zurich. He had laid a statement of the main principle of his discipline before the synod of Zurich in 1538. His whole conduct proves his anxious desire to keep himself free from the state, and hence his refusal to administer the communion to the excited and enraged city.

The three following articles may be regarded as occupying the first rank in his system of church discipline:—

“The city (Geneva) must be divided into certain parishes, there always being danger of confusion when the people have not their own minister, and when the minister does not know his proper charge. A sufficient number of clergy must be chosen to accomplish this purpose. The right use of excom-



munication must be restored as before ordered ; that is, respectable and prudent men must be selected from each quarter of the city, to join with us in watching over the proper mode of its infliction. A becoming order must be observed in the call of the clergy, that the laying on of hands, which belongs only to the clergy, may not be taken away by the power of the magistrates, as ours have more than once attempted to do." Calvin also again expresses his anxious desire to have the Lord's Supper administered every month.

We have here to remark : 1. That he subjected the church to the state, for he allowed the council to choose the elders of the church, foreseeing, probably, that excommunication would only be practicable if left to be administered by laymen chosen by the state ; and 2. That he insisted, on the contrary, upon the right of the clergy only to exercise the spiritual function of ordaining preachers.

At a somewhat later period we find Viret making the experiment already alluded to, of establishing a consistory ; and many commands of the council, even before Calvin's return, indicate great earnestness in reference to discipline.

The first historical account of the so-named 'Ordonnances Ecclésiastiques' occurs in the year 1541, when the council recalled Calvin. I extract it from one of the oldest printed copies of the year 1575. They define the duties of the four classes of ecclesiastical persons, as known also in the primitive church ; namely, preachers, doctors or teachers, elders, and deacons.

1. The choice of preachers depends, in the first instance, on the clergy, who elect those to be presented ; in the second place, on the council, which must approve and confirm the election ; and in the third place, on the congregation, who, if they have anything to object, must make it known to the syndics, that all may be satisfied with the choice. Every minister must swear, on his election, to obey the laws of the state and of the church, but not in such a manner as to limit his freedom in preaching the Gospel.

To uphold the purity of the clergy, whether of the city or the country, a weekly assembly was held, and every minister was to discourse, in his turn, on the portion of Scripture appointed for the day. After the sermon the ministers were to withdraw and make their remarks, especially on the preacher. If any controversy arose on matters of doctrine, they were to employ their best endeavors to preserve union ; and if they failed in this, the

church elders were to give their opinion on the subject, and strive to restore peace. Should this also prove of no avail, the council was to decide.

The elders were to share with the ministers in watching over the conduct and education of the clergy; but the council was to determine disputes and punish offenders. The clergy were mutually to censure each other before the administration of the Lord's Supper. The clergy moreover were to remain subject to the legal tribunals. Children were to be baptized in the church, and by the clergy only. The illegitimate were to be especially noted, that the proper tribunal might have knowledge of them. Marriages might be celebrated any day, after notice had been given three times, except when the Lord's Supper was administered: this was to be as often as possible, but four times were fixed for its celebration. The preachers were to give the bread, the elders and deacons the cup, but only in the church. The communicant was previously to attend his minister, to give an account of his faith. Children were to be instructed in the Catechism, and repeat their creed. The elders were to see that this was done. Every year, before Easter, a visitation from house to house was to take place. The preacher, with one of the elders, was then to examine the inhabitants respecting their faith. The sick were to send for a clergyman, and the prisons were to be visited by a minister with a member of the council.

2. With regard to the doctors of the church, they were to read publicly the Old and New Testaments, and to teach the ancient languages. For this purpose a gymnasium was established.

3. The church elders were to watch over the morals of all. They were chosen by the lesser council, and confirmed by the preachers,—two out of the lesser council, and ten out of that of the sixty, or two hundred. The lesser council ratified the choice, but the congregation had a veto. They were elected every year, but might continue in office a longer period.

The consistory, which was formed of elders and preachers, assembled every Thursday. A messenger of the civil court summoned the persons whose presence was required before it. As it had no power of its own, the council interfered if any one despised its commands. Secret sins and offences were censured in secret, and no one was called before it whose case demanded signal chastisement. If they whom it censured neglected its warnings, they were excluded from the Lord's table. For open offences, the punishment, after a second censure, was excom-

munication. Evil-doers were suspended. The right of excommunication always belonged to the consistory. If any one opposed the true doctrine, and refused to be corrected, he was suspended, and the government was informed of the case. Should any one despise the sacrament, and persevere for half a year in his contempt of it after being censured, he was to appear before the council, and be sentenced to banishment for a year. But everything was to be done with moderation: censures were to be regarded in the light of medicines. The excommunicated, if they did not improve, were to be brought publicly before the congregation, it being unlawful for any one, according to the command of Scripture, to hold intercourse with an excommunicated person.

The consistory was never to assume any of the rights of the civil power. If the infliction of punishment seemed necessary to it, it was to lay the circumstances before the government, it belonging unto God to determine the powers of both.

All causes relating to marriage were to be tried before the consistory: it was to endeavor to reconcile the parties. If a judicial sentence was necessary, the affair was to be referred to the council.

4. The deacons were divided into two classes. 1. They were to administer the alms regularly collected. 2. They were to take care of the sick, and to provide food for the poor. These deacons were elected in the same manner as the elders.

Perfect unity existed in the state through the intimate connection of the consistory with the council. As all offences against religion were also offences against the order of the state, and were to be punished by the civil magistrates, the legislator associated a double number of lay judges with the ministers. The latter consequently might at any time be outvoted, and hence all danger of an inquisition-like tribunal was effectually removed. But these elders had a seat also in the civil court, and announced to it the guilty. The elders therefore were the bond of union between the church and state, and the most important members, consequently, of the theocratic government. As spiritual judges, the elders inflicted no civil penalties, but they determined what should be heard before the spiritual, and what before the civil tribunal. A syndic presided in the spiritual assembly. In the year 1561, however, it was declared that it was only as a church elder, and for the affairs of the church, that he presided; nor did he, in this instance, bear the

wand of the syndic. The elders were chosen from the council, and their election was confirmed by the great council, the people and the preachers; so that the church was altogether in the hand of the state, which also appointed all the clergy. They were re-elected every year, and their names publicly announced. As they were not, however, chosen indiscriminately from the people, but out of the various councils, this presbyterian form of government was not pure; and presbyterianism was only known, in all its purity, at a later period in France. The powers of the different orders were mixed together; the state seized upon the rights of the church, and perverted them; and Calvin himself acknowledged that the form of discipline established, instead of being perfect, was only tolerable. Compelled by the force of circumstances, he was obliged, as we shall shortly see, to suffer several variations from the pure idea of presbyterianism.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### REMARKS ON THE PRINCIPLES ADOPTED BY CALVIN IN THE FOUNDATION OF THE GENEVESE CHURCH.

WHILE we cannot look without wonder at Calvin, as he surmounted, step by step, the accumulated defences gathered round the catholic church, so it is not to be denied that he was more successful in pulling down than in building up. In theory, indeed, it appeared, that what he undertook, and readily and nobly executed, must exhibit in every respect the purest antagonism to Rome. But when we take a nearer view of his work, we find that, willingly or not, he was drawn into too entire an opposition to the catholic church, while on the other side he retained some of its peculiarities. Three principles especially influenced him in the erection of his edifice.

1. The first was that which all the reformers followed, namely, that as the temporal state was subjected to the ecclesiastical in the catholic church, so, in the protestant, the church must be subordinate to the state.

2. That the pride and ambition of the clergy, which discover themselves as soon as they stand alone, and acquire power, as



history unhappily proves, must be subdued by a lay-government.

3. That the church must lead its members to truth and virtue, not by doctrine and example only, but by a moral power, which it has received from God.

I. The first principle which all the reformers were obliged to admit, partly from the conviction that it afforded the best means to bridle spiritual tyranny, and partly from the influence exercised by the princes who supported them, and who retook from the pope that of which he had deprived them,—this very principle has given occasion to endless abuses and shows, leading as it does to the servitude of the church, that the reformation was destined to be only a passing work in opposition to the hierarchy; and that the pure church-form would not be developed, till the spirit of the Gospel had so pervaded the state as to render it willing to emancipate the church.

Although Calvin had an exalted idea of the spiritual dignity of the church, yet the state was allowed a very injurious superiority in Geneva, and interfered in many ways with ecclesiastical affairs: it pronounced, for example, the final sentence on dogmatic questions. The power of the synods altogether failed in Geneva, and this was wholly against Calvin's principles. The appointment of the clergy indeed must, under any rule, continue with the state: but they were also paid by the latter in Geneva. This was never the case in the Israelitish state, in which the schools of the prophets, and the prophets, were independent of the kings; and according to the principles of the primitive age, the ministers were supported by the people.

The church had no treasury in Geneva, and was not allowed to administer its own revenues: this was also opposed to Calvin's views. All ecclesiastical judgments had also to be submitted to the decision of the council. When so much was conceded, resistance afterwards was vain, whenever the temporal power acted unjustly, as Calvin himself discovered. All that he preserved pure was the ordination of the preachers, and the right of excommunication. Calvin would fain have taken no pay from the state, but from the congregation only, and would rather have sacrificed his life than let the state determine doctrines. If the church indeed be represented by the clergy only, spiritual pride must be restrained, and servility will be the consequence. On the contrary, when the laity have a share in the representation, the pride of the clergy is kept under, and there

is no danger of its being superseded by servility. It is in France only that the synodal form of government, the best and most useful for the church, has been established. Among the persecuted reformers of that country, a protest was naturally made against the influence of the state. Hence they possessed an independence, and a more correct feeling of the dignity of the church than that which existed in the other protestant communities, and the clergy often expressed themselves in the synod with great freedom against the state. The excellency of this species of government is seen in this:—1. that it not only secures a pure opposition to Rome, but renders spiritual tyranny impossible; 2. that the clergy contend not for their own interests merely, but as the representatives of the church or congregation, and therefore feel protected against the state; and 3. because Christ himself constitutes the unity, and is necessarily the first in an assembly where all the rest are only brethren and equals. The history of the French church exhibits the pure theocratic element of the protestant system, the desire, that is, to establish in the name of God and of Christ a society bound together in the unity of faith, and laboring, in the midst of error and idolatry, to enrich by its spiritual energy the temporal state with truth and salvation. Happy would it have been, had Henry IV. and Sully not given it a political existence, which brought another strange element into the pure theocracy, confused the several powers, and led to the dissolution of the church in the times of Richelieu and Louis XIV.

The second principle, on the contrary, is altogether just, Christian-like and safe, if not carried to excess. Calvin overthrew the caste of the catholic clergy. The idea is deeply rooted in Christianity that every believer is a priest. Moses had said to the Israelites, "Ye shall be to me a nation of priests and a holy people." And in the primitive church all its teachers occupied the same rank, and hence spiritual despotism was impossible.

But we must here remark, first, that the elders in Geneva, contrary to Calvin's principle, were not chosen from the congregation but from the council, and through the council, thereby constituting a regular aristocracy as in the state itself; and, secondly, that Calvin and his associates went to the opposite extreme; since the number of the lay members by far exceeded that of the clergy, so that the latter could not fail to find themselves overpowered,—a source frequently of anarchy. This too free form

of church government was transplanted into Scotland, and encouraged the unquiet spirit of the presbyterians, which, not being counterbalanced by a strong spiritual element, soon greatly degenerated, became guilty of violent excesses, and is probably to the present day the source of that loose and unsettled state of things which renders union impossible. This seems to prove that the episcopal, or some other enduring element, was not sufficiently upholden in the Calvinistic system; and such may be the reason why Calvin always considered it necessary to occupy the post of perpetual moderator, or president, of the consistorial assembly, thinking thereby to preserve the unity of the whole.

The third principle has somewhat both of truth and falsehood. It is self-evident that some kind of church order or government is necessary; but the question is, how far it may interfere with social life. Discipline consists of two parts; the one respecting church order, the other the instruction of the members of the church. Thus the sacraments must be administered, the Sabbath observed, and divine service properly performed and revered. So too children are to be instructed, and baptisms and marriages solemnized by ordained ministers. But it may be asked, shall the church educate? Shall every member of the church have a confessor, to whom he is bound to uncover his soul? The reformers perhaps might have wished this to be the case, but Luther only established a voluntary confession. It was asked, "May the church expel evil-doers and unbelievers from her communion?" Calvin answered, Yes; and established a moral code, which Luther did not do; the former imitating the zeal of the catholic church, and contradicting his own principles by giving up the offender to be punished by the civil power, or the council.

Thus he intruded into the circle of social life, as the government, on its part, was guilty of interfering with the management, and even with the doctrines of the church. He wished the elders to urge the civil magistrate to restrain the impenitent, whereby he established a temporal, not a spiritual theocracy. "They no longer pertain to the church," he said. This excited Bossuet's attention as a catholic. Calvin departed probably from the right principles propounded in the Institutes, only because driven to a different course by the obstinate viciousness of the people. His spirit should be contemplated in his works, rather than in his doings. He has displayed his moral judgment so admirably in a theoretical point of view, that no Chris-

tian can find anything to object to it. But there were rocks lying on the path of the real world. His ideas as a reformer were better developed in France.

Such was the number of believers in that country, in the year 1559, quietly organized under the presbyterian form of government, that they were able to hold a general synod in Paris, and exhibited their views of discipline in forty articles. In several successive synods these first principles were further developed, till at length the law-book of the French church, the '*Discipline des Eglises Réformées de France*,' was perfected. It contains, in the last edition, fourteen chapters and 222 articles.\*

To the rule thus established, the members of the different congregations scattered throughout the kingdom submitted themselves, and persons of the highest rank admitted with profound reverence the censures of the church. The work written by Larroque against the revilers of the reformation proves, by various striking instances, how great an effort was made to harmonize this system of discipline with the primitive rule, and how, consequently, it must ever continue to serve as a basis for the rising church.

The first circumstance which claims attention, is the independence of the church in relation to the state. The church governs itself by its own deputies, and its independence is founded on the regulation, that it must itself provide for all the expenses of its government, pay all its ministers and officers, and all the charges arising from the journeys, rendered necessary by the nature of its constitution. Those branches of the church which show an unwillingness to share the general expenses are subjected to the severest censures, and deprived of their ministers. Thus it is said, "The churches ought to understand, that the ecclesiastical assemblies and conferences, provincial and national synods, are the bonds and supports of concord and union against schisms, heresies and other evils. In case any church should refuse to contribute to the expense arising from attendance on such assemblies, it shall be severely censured, as deserting the holy union which ought to exist among us." The union and power of the church are, in fact, dependent upon the national synod, which is yearly assembled. A commissioner

\* C. d'Huisseau, minister of Saumur, first published a complete edition of the '*Discipline*' in 1666. This was followed by Larroque's work. The synod of Dort established a system of discipline for the reformed church of the Netherlands. See also Aymon, *Hist. des Synodes de France*, and Beza's *Hist. Eccles.*, liv. ii. pp. 173-185.



appointed by the temporal power is present at its meetings, and thus unites the church with the state.

Unlimited authority is given to the national synod ; it appoints and removes preachers, it excommunicates offending members, and censures ministers. It determines the most difficult questions proposed to it by the several consistories, whether they refer to matters of conscience, or to the relation in which the church stands to the catholics. It has the right of exercising a censorship on published works ; it regulates controversies, and pronounces judgment according to Scripture only, without reference to the fathers, silencing dogmatic strifes, to preserve unity, which is holy. It has the further power of improving discipline, and may even modify the confession of faith.

In this national synod an appeal may be made from the decisions of the consistories and provincial synods. Every church sends deputies to it ; the minister must always attend, with one or two lay-presbyters (*anciens*) ; his mission would otherwise not avail. It is the privilege of the consistories, not of the people, to elect the deputies to the synod, but they are chosen from the people. The government is therefore not republican, but aristocratic, but in such a manner that no hierarchical tendency is possible. This is prevented by the right of the congregations in all cases to pronounce the *veto*. So also the accounts taken of church revenues are in the hands, not of the state, but of the people, or the congregation.\* Episcopal power is fundamentally resisted, and its establishment rendered impossible, the president being chosen in the national synod by a plurality of votes, and only as moderator of the proceedings. He opens the business of the assembly, but is not allowed to express his opinion till all the other members have been heard. In every other respect the most perfect equality reigns among those present, according to the command of Christ. Ministers and laymen occupy the same place, and this is the case even in regard to the right of censure. The only difference is, that a layman can never be chosen president of the synod.

The consistories consist of preachers and laymen, the number of the latter not being fixed, but always greater than that of the former. They are under the circle and class synods, which meet four times in the year, and are subject to the provincial synods, which meet twice annually and are under the national synod. When the meeting of the synod is over, all is dissolved ;

\* Disc. ch. iv. art. 3.

and then unhappily the middle point, the support of unity, is wanting to the whole. There then remains only a single province, charged with conducting the affairs of the church, in case the necessity should occur of re-assembling the national synod.\*

This is the weak side of the synodal form of government; every consistory, every provincial synod, stands isolated, without defence, without appeal, during this interval; unity is thus likely to be lost in multiplicity; and as only twenty-nine general synods have been held in the course of a century and a half, the church has remained for years together without any point of union. A perpetual moderator would have given it more stability and dignity. But in the first synod, held in Paris, a protest was characteristically made against the appointment of a permanent moderator, and in the very first article adopted. The aristocratic principle, however, is held so much the more firmly. At the beginning, the congregation, with the consent of the clergy, formed the first consistory, consisting of ministers, *anciens* and *anciens diacres*, the latter being also members of the consistory. These, however, being once nominated, have the power of re-election in themselves. The preachers, for example, are nominated by the provincial synods, which also select the students, *écoliers proposans*, examine and ordain them. They preach three times before the congregation, which has the *veto*, so that republican violence is resisted on the one side, the preacher being only proposed to them; and on the other hierarchical tyranny, since no preacher not approved by the people can be obtruded upon them. The consistory also chooses the *anciens* and the *anciens diacres*, and submits them to the approval of the people, to be received or rejected. The *anciens* in the absence of the ministers, may hold public prayer and read sermons; but the *anciens diacres* are not permitted to catechize.

Ministers are subject to the censure of their synod, and the magistrate may remind them of their duty, by means of the synod or provincial synod. Consistories have the power of suspending offenders from the communion, and even of excommunicating them; but the sentence must be confirmed by the provincial synod. All officers of the church, schoolmasters and singers included, must subscribe the confession of faith and book of discipline, which two main pillars, the law that is, and the

\* Cap. ix. art. 1, 7, 11.

expression of recognized truth, form the grand supports of the church's unity.

The preachers exercise power over the community by the living word, by their discourses, by the sacraments and discipline. If an offence be known to only a few persons, the temporary separation from the Lord's table shall not be openly declared, but shall be made known to the consistory only, in order to avoid the infliction of unnecessary disgrace and vexation. In the case of greater sins and errors, the offender shall be immediately and publicly excluded from the sacrament, even although he evidence repentance, that he may be humbled, and that others may be inspired with fear. But if the repentance be evidently sincere, the penitent shall be openly restored to the peace of the church. If, on the contrary, he continues hardened, notwithstanding all the admonitions and efforts employed, he is to be once more openly warned in the name of the church, and the church itself is to be exhorted to pray for him, so that he may be preserved from the unhappiness of a final separation, and that it may be seen, at the same time, how unwillingly the ministers of the congregation proceed to such extremities. The importance and the end of this punishment, no other object being sought thereby but the honor of God, the peace of the church, and the salvation of the individual, are plainly set forth in the holy Scriptures. The warnings spoken of are given for three successive Sundays. On the first, the offender, to spare his feelings, is not named; but on the second and third he is. If he remains obdurate, the sentence of excommunication is openly pronounced against him on the fourth Sunday, and by the preacher, "on the authority of God's Word, and with the consent of the whole church." The people are then generally warned to avoid having any intercourse with such a man, that he may be the sooner humbled and moved to confess his sin. As soon as he exhibits repentance, the congregation is to be informed of it, that it may join in thanksgiving to God, and convince itself of the reality of the change. The sinner is then openly to acknowledge his offence, to condemn himself, to ask pardon of God and the church, and thus to seek reconciliation with the brethren.

Let us represent to ourselves the great assembly of believers. The minister, as the organ of the church, is heard pronouncing from the pulpit God's judgment on the sinner, with a forefeeling of the eternal judgment; and as the words of the curse

fall from his lips, the congregation, if truly Christian, recognizes the proceeding as the most powerful moral means that can be employed for the humbling of a sinner. This spiritual censure, this profound pious feeling, this reverence for the communion, and love to fallen souls, which it is sought to alarm by the judgments of God, when love can do no more, indicate the existence of a deep Christian life. But where infidelity prevails, and the holy Supper of the Lord is disregarded, where it is viewed in the light of a mere commemorative ceremony, as a mere form, that is,—where such is the case, the edifice of the church must soon fall, and this powerful means of good be altogether lost. Excommunication, however, was known in the reformed church till within the last hundred years. Christianity indeed must sink lower than Judaism, or even than heathenism, and be deprived of all its sacred force and inward worth, to agree with the present state of the church, when laughter is excited if even the slightest mention be made of excommunication. This contempt for such a mode of punishment is opposed to the plainest declarations of Christ and his apostles,\* to the practice of the primitive church, and to the doctrine of the fathers.

The Calvinistic form of the presbyterian system differs from that of the primitive church only in the following particulars:—

1. A distinction is established between the clergy and laity, of which no mention is made in the records of the primitive church.
2. The episcopal element, which was conspicuous in the early church, is here thrown into obscurity. This ecclesiastical system consequently occupies a middle place between the episcopal government, and the freedom of the methodist church, which recognizes lay ministers, who are allowed to preach the Gospel, but needing, according to Wesley's own views, a superintendent of higher rank. Calvin viewed the position of the clergy as that of teachers, and appointed regular examinations for the younger clergy who had finished their studies. It was not altogether according to the apostolic rule to refuse the laity permission to preach.
3. By the regulation of the French church, the deacons are admitted to a place in the consistory, which was originally confined to the clergy.

These slight deviations excepted, the system which we are describing was purely apostolic in its principles, and was as little the product of popular interference as Calvin's regulation of the state. The existence of government is from above, and not from

\* Matt. xviii. 17; 1 Cor. v. 5; 1 Tim. i. 20.



beneath ; and yet the congregation, or the people, may possess their full rights, and as much freedom as is consistent with order.

A glance at the ecclesiastical constitution established in Germany, will show still more evidently the difficulties with which the protestants had to contend, and the imperfection of the existing means of superintendence, with the noble elements which lay involved in the Calvinistic structure.

That it cost Luther, who was the first to set himself in opposition to the hierarchy, no slight trouble to acquire any clear notion of the church, and of its relation to the state, is evident from the indefiniteness of his views. Melancthon gave a far better representation of the church in his 'Apology.' Thus, in contradistinction to the catholic church, he describes the true church of Christ as the congregation of saints, bound together by the same faith in Christ, and whose communion with each other is declared by their joining in the same confession, and participating in the same sacraments. The visible, political union of the people of God in the Old Testament, was a type of the future spiritual polity. The form of the outward constitution was a matter of indifference to the German reformers. The *politia externa* might exist under any variety of forms, if it did but uphold the kingdom of God. Hence they did not reject, as Calvin and the Swiss, the catholic constitution. They believed that they ought to persevere, in so far as they could do so consistently with the Gospel. Thus it happened that they held no definite views on the rights of the church, and would willingly have retained the catholic system, had the bishops submitted to be reformed. But as these dignitaries resisted such attempts, and the church was no longer subjected to their authority, the reformers gave their support to the temporal government, that they might obtain in return the aid of its support. Thus they allowed it to change the constitution of the churches, when the interests of the Gospel required it, and their officers neglected to do it themselves. Hence the earlier forms originated with the civil power, and the latter acquired ecclesiastical authority by the further development of the reformation. As early as the year 1520 Luther called upon the emperor and the nobility to aid the reformation, and thus to establish the church by means of the temporal power. Subsequently, as he gave no peculiar form of government to the church, he was led in his perplexity to desire that the civil magistrate would act more decidedly, and

that the government might refuse to tolerate vain doctrine, though it did not compel confession. He also advised the banishment of heretics, but not their capital punishment, in the infliction of which the civil power might go too far. After the death of Frederic the Wise, he felt still more evidently the insufficiency of his earlier views. "If, on the one side, we limit and define, it is then taken advantage of; a law is necessarily introduced, and opposed to the freedom of belief; if, on the other, nothing is determined, men rush on, and make as many factions as there are heads, and thus both the Christian simplicity and the Christian union, of which St. Paul and St. Peter speak, are destroyed."

In 1527, when the great church-visitation in the electorate of Saxony was brought to a close, Luther wrote in the preface to the Visitation-articles, drawn up by Melancthon,—“Although the electors are not called upon to teach or to govern in a spiritual capacity, still they are bound, even as temporal rulers, to prevent schisms, factions, and disturbances; even as the emperor Constantine summoned the bishops to Nicaea, because he neither would nor could suffer the schism which Arius had created among the Christians, but constrained them to unity of doctrine and belief.”

“But after making some few statements of his opinion, Luther seems to have left the whole matter, of the relation of the state to the church, and of their respective rights, to be settled by his followers. Instead of a mixed tribunal of laity and clergy being instituted, as in Geneva, to settle the questions in debate, superintendents were appointed. At the very first church-visitation they received full authority to watch over churches and schools, to provide for the defence of pure doctrine, of outward order, of church property, and, further, to determine disputes respecting marriages. But as this arrangement was not found sufficient, a spiritual tribunal was established, first at Wittenberg, through the chancellor Brück, and which consisted of two spiritual and two lay councillors. During Luther's life-time, that is, in 1542, the elector John Frederic employed the Wittenberg theologians and three jurists to draw up a constitution for this tribunal.

The principles of the Lutheran church government, as contrasted with those of the Calvinistic, are seen in the so-called Wittenberg reformation of 1545, the last and the most striking exhibition of the views of the Saxon divines on church polity.

Among other things, it is said of bishops :—“A certain variety

of ranks is necessary among the servants of the church ; for unless all had the same gifts, the wiser must exercise inspection over the weak. If the existing bishops would cease from their enmity to the Gospel, and embrace the true doctrine, we might patiently endure their authority. Their aim would then necessarily be, either to preach the gospel themselves, or to have it preached by faithful men. They would exercise by their visitations a control over the doctrine of the church, would hold ecclesiastical sessions, and sometimes synods, and would take care of both the higher and lower schools. With regard to the choice of bishops, it seems best that it should remain as before, in the hands of the supreme colleges or chapters, and that where the princes have certain rights they should still retain them. For if an attempt should be made to restore the old practice of electing bishops by the votes of the whole people, or of the chief men of all ranks, let us remember that this mode of electing them excited, in ancient times, the greatest tumults in Asia, in Greece and Italy ; and were it practised in Germany, it would produce still more fearful consequences."

In the fourth section, on church-tribunals, it is said,—“ God has committed the sword to the magistrate, to uphold discipline and respect ; and He has also established an ecclesiastical tribunal, which has not the power of life and death, but that of excluding from church privileges and communion.” Subsequently, and with good reason, disputes concerning marriages were referred to this tribunal, so many questions of conscience arising therefrom. These questions had often been found too difficult and perplexed to be resolved by individual pastors : it was therefore determined to establish consistories, at convenient distances, in every diocese, before which matrimonial disputes might be settled in a Christian spirit.

The clergy of every place were to admonish all who had fallen into sin or error. If they did not improve, they were to be cited before the consistory, in order, if found guilty, to be punished. This was the case when offences had been committed of which the civil magistrate took no cognizance ; as for example, if any one published false doctrine, or spoke scornfully of the Gospel or the sacraments ; if he neglected for a whole year to make confession, or to partake of the Lord's Supper ; if he reviled his pastor, or any other servant of God ; if he lived in open adultery, or lent his money on usury, or was disobedient to his parents, or indulged in intemperance, or in gambling. In any of these

cases, the consistories were to pronounce sentence of excommunication, and to send an account of the sentence thus passed to the parish in which the offender dwelt: there the instrument was to be read from the pulpit, or nailed to the church-door. Should the offender despise this proceeding against him, he might, under certain circumstances, be punished by the temporal power.

According to the views of the Saxon reformers, the true church, agreeably to its proper nature, was an object of belief, but never perfect on earth. Without separating however the invisible from the visible church, the kingdom of the Gospel is ever to be viewed as distinct from the kingdom of the law, and therefore as independent of the latter. But the church may require in times of necessity the protection of the state. This, Christian magistrates owe exclusively to the Christian faith; and hence there is naturally an internal bond of union between the temporal and the ecclesiastical power.

That Luther was unwilling to introduce, as Calvin did, constitutional forms, arose from the conviction, that the steps by which the enlightenment of the German people advanced did not agree with the establishment of such forms. He thus expressed his anxiety, "that factions might not spring therefrom; for the Germans are a wild, rude, turbulent people, with whom it is not easy to begin anything, unless there be the pressure of the greatest necessity."\*

Philip of Hesse made the experiment in 1526 of a free constitution, but without finding any imitator. The principles of this constitution were indeed far more republican than the Calvinistic system. Every district was entire in itself, and had the right to choose its own bishop (or pastor), and to depose him. An assembly of laymen and ministers was held every week, in which the conduct of every one, the bishop included, was proved and judged; but the whole congregation only could excommunicate. Marriage causes were tried in each district by the bishop and experienced assistants. Excommunication was inflicted for spiritual offences only, but it carried with it the loss of all civil rights. The churches were united together by a synod, which assembled yearly at Marburg. Every bishop was to be accompanied by a lay deputy. The sovereign, the higher and lower nobility, in case they were present, and the bishops and lay deputies, had all the right of voting. The synod tried,

\* Walch x. 272. Compare also Tholuck, *Litter. Anzeiger*, 1832, p. 478.



approved or annulled, the deposition of any bishop which might have taken place in his community. "In difficult cases the parishes might appeal to the synod, but its decisions had no power except that which they derived from their intrinsic worth." The synod at Homberg and Lambert of Avignon rejected this constitution. Essential alterations however were soon necessarily introduced into this system of church polity, which brought to light its unfitness for the times. The German communities would probably not have been opposed to such a constitution, if it had been less republican, and had it been introduced by degrees, and not suddenly. Calvin had to struggle twenty years for his 'Institute,' and had to educate a new people for himself. Luther also wished to arm himself with the right of excommunication, but had not the courage to introduce it. In his last sermon on confession, preached at Wittenberg in 1522\* (on the occasion of the Carlstadt disturbance), he says, "Christ says of Confession, 'If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone;† and if the offender would not abstain from his sin and humble himself, the minister was to separate him from the whole congregation, and put him under ban, till he repented and was again received. It would be a Christian work to restore this discipline, were it possible, but I cannot trust to myself alone to establish it.'" A sterner system of discipline, such a one as was not introduced till after his death, would have saved Luther many annoyances. He comforted himself with the hope, that the improved state of the church would of itself bring about a better form of government.

The third form of church polity, and the one most nearly allied to that of the early catholic church, was established in England. The original catholic form was preserved there. Royal authority took the place of the pope, and arbitrarily commanded what should be believed. It assumed a more gracious character under Elizabeth, and the firm immovable Anglican system grew up by degrees, but the life of the church again became torpid in it. It is however worthy of remark, that neither Calvin nor Luther believed he had discovered the best form of church government. Guided by a right feeling and experience, the former was not opposed to a combination of various forms of polity. As he assembled the clergy under his own single presidency, to elect pastors, and after preaching to judge

\* Sermon vom Bann, bei Walch xix. p. 1099.

† Matt. xviii. 15.

of their lives and doctrine (following in this respect the pattern of the consistory), he himself recommended in fact the episcopal element for the larger and more important countries, in order to secure union and order. In conformity with this principle, he continued permanent president of the consistory, though by doing so he contradicted all the rules of presbyterianism which he wished to establish. Casaubon declares, in a conversation with Uytenbogaert, that Calvin had become bishop of Geneva. "Mr. de Beza had said to him, that Mr. Calvin, who had rejected episcopacy, was in fact bishop of Geneva, and that a little before his death he had proposed to Mr. Beza to make him his successor, but that the latter had refused the offer."\*

It thus appears that Calvin wished, and considered it necessary, that the place of president, which gave him importance, should always pertain to some distinguished member of the church. But Beza had not the same view, and felt anxious that the office should be held by a regular succession of new occupants. We learn from the registers of the year 1580 how the preachers expressed their fears to the council, that the office of president, if its possessor were not elected weekly, might be converted at length into that of a bishop. "They would joyfully," they said, "have allowed Calvin constantly to hold this place, extraordinarily endowed as he was with grace from above; but it was very certain that he had never been regularly elected to the office."

Still more remarkable is it, that Calvin himself proposed a form of church government to Sigismund, king of Poland, in which he combined the episcopal with the presbyterian element; his clear understanding perceiving well, that a different form of polity was necessary for a great kingdom, to that which he had established in Geneva. Calvin's letter is dated 1544: "The ancient church," he says, "introduced the patriarchate, and gave each province its primate, that by this bond of peace and union the bishops might be more firmly held together. As if in the present day an archbishop should be appointed president in the renowned kingdom of Poland, not to rule over the rest, or to invade their rights, but who, to preserve order, should possess the first rank in the synods, and strive to preserve a holy union among his official brethren. Bishops also might be appointed for the provinces and for the cities, on whom the

\* *Epist. Præstant. Virorum*, Amst. 1684, p. 250; and Brandt, *Hist. de la Réf.* i. 397.

responsibility should peculiarly rest of preserving order. The natural course of things directs that one should be chosen from the rest to take the chief management of affairs ; but it is a very different thing for a man to be satisfied with a moderate degree of honor, according to the proper measure of human capability, to his wishing to embrace the whole world in his boundless sway."

And further, in the often-cited epistle to Somerset, Calvin does not assail the episcopal form of government, but speaks of pastors, curates, and bishops. "The office of curates and bishops," he says, "is to watch over discipline ;" which he would never have said if he had considered this species of government inconsistent with the Gospel. Still Calvin remains the especial representative of presbyterianism, while Luther represents the consistorial, and Cranmer the episcopal system, without either the one or the other thinking he had reached perfection. If these three forms were more thoroughly blended together, the presbytery (consisting of laymen and ministers) would have to undertake the peculiar business of governing, and the management therefore of the common temporal concerns of the church ; the consistory, composed entirely of spiritual members, would watch over matters purely spiritual, as those relating to faith, worship, or discipline. But in both cases their determinations would be only temporary, it being for synods and general synods to unite them in one body, and finally determine the main points of discussion. This is according to the principle, that it is injurious for the laity to meddle with spiritual, or for the clergy to interfere with worldly affairs ; while each ought to have the right of pronouncing a *veto* on the resolutions of the other, to prevent the introduction of abuse or despotism.

According to the idea thus suggested, the bishop would be the permanent moderator of the consistory and the synod, but not the moderator of the presbytery, who might be changed by election or lot. Here would therefore be the three elements of a constitutional government. The bishop would represent the kingly element ; the consistory the upper chamber, that is, the fixed unchanging principle of order ; whilst the presbytery would represent the element of movement in the lower chamber ; the church elders and deacons entering and deciding as representatives of the people, and being, according to Calvin's principle, double in number above the rest. New and fundamental laws could only be passed by the consent of the three powers, that

is, by their uniting together, if the question concerned ecclesiastical rights or dogmas, and deciding according to the sense of Scripture. This most complete synod shows the measure of divine grace, which God imparted to the church for the recognition of the truth at one particular time.

But should the sublimer idea of the theocratic government become more and more developed in christianized humanity, and this is not improbable, we should then arrive at a higher exhibition of the power of the state in reference to the church; at that in which the king is seen, like the high-priest in Israel, as the bishop of the church, and standing at the head of spiritual affairs; whilst the bishops and the synods (with no other power than that given by the spirit and by prayer) are called in to afford their counsel on worldly and political matters, on those, that is, which concern war and peace, or the justice of warlike undertakings; the magistrate notwithstanding being without spiritual, and the church without temporal, power; both fulfilling the will of God in Christ.

Thus there is much to admire and praise in the pure theocratic element, and it is far from deserving, as some would pretend, to be despised. The archbishops and bishops in England have a seat and voice in parliament; and many of the European sovereigns, as in Prussia and Russia, are regarded as the heads of their respective churches.

Ecclesiastical order requires unity in the church. After having considered the outward form of the church, we will turn our attention more particularly to its inward life. Christ insists upon that oneness, without which no communion is possible, and he said,—“I pray for them, that they may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in Thee.” This prayer has had its effect in all ages, producing that constant union of spirit among all true believers, which may be seen amid every variety of outward forms and distinctions. Albigenses, Waldenses, Wickliffites, Hussites, evangelical protestants,—all have the same faith in fundamental points, and manifest a true oneness in spirit, in the church,—a unity contrary to that of the Romish church, in which an outward union has been forcibly established by fear and the inquisition. The might of the Holy Spirit shows itself in the manner in which the various divisions of the Christian church have been constantly drawn together, whenever the church suffered violence. It is the aim of the Holy Spirit to bring Christians as a community to God. It is He alone who



can establish a true inward unity : the outward means will avail nothing, if his quickening influence be not there. The union of the various parties through belief in one truth is consequently a grand idea, rich in results, and will always distinguish the efforts of true Christians. All those who have sought to call them forth are to be regarded as the benefactors of mankind, because they have endeavored to prevent indescribable sufferings, but have too often chosen wrong means, such, that is, as were not agreeable to the Holy Spirit.

This oneness in God, through Jesus Christ, was the desire of all the reformers ; and Calvin, when he separated himself from the church, immediately established again a unity in his own evangelical church ; and this was the great desire of his soul, and the grand aim of his efforts, his whole life through. But this unity, which consists in the spirit, can only be promoted by spiritual means. This too was Calvin's conviction ; but he was in peculiar circumstances, and often felt it his duty to act with some degree of violence, like one of the prophets of the old covenant. He makes innumerable allusions to this unity in the spirit, readily suffering little variations, and insisting upon freedom of opinion.

As this unity consists in the spirit, it can easily be called forth. In their endless endeavors to acquire it, Christians have used various means to effect a union, and thereby gain their end. In the first place, we see compulsion and ignorance, by which the catholic church holds its members together. Scriptural instruction is the principle of the protestant church ; the discussion of doctrines ; according to which method people may set dogmas, like provinces, one against the other. Indifference as to doctrine, and Christian charity, have also been employed, times without number, as means of union. But the means proper to the Calvinistic system consist principally in uniformity of government, and in the endeavor to awaken the same spirit,—a spirit striving after the truth in love, through the combined efforts of presbyteries and synods ; but lastly also by confessions, catechisms, and liturgical forms.

Unity in the spirit therefore will not be established, because an oath of uniformity has been taken ; but the door will be closed in some degree against the lovers of strife, and oneness of spirit will be promoted by degrees, through the preaching of the same faith in the same expressions. That Calvin believed it possible to attain to a holy union in this way, is proved by an important

passage from his letter to Somerset, in which he says that the church of God could not exist without catechisms.

It may be objected to his principle, that creeds in the present day are almost forgotten, and that the Bible alone effects unity. And we here indeed stumble upon an evident contradiction, since, according to the basis of the reformation, freedom of conscience and the right of individual interpretation of Scripture are the very essence of its opposition to Rome. So that, according to this, the reformers could not have the right to prescribe a formulary of belief, and to punish every one with excommunication who would not adopt it. Thus on the one side unity is holy in their eyes, and on the other individual freedom: it is impossible that they should exist together.

In Geneva, as in Germany, freedom of conscience has not been always respected, though Calvin only desired to have order, without compulsion; and Luther in his better hours expressed himself powerfully against persecution. In the concordance-formulary also he says, "We ought not to look for a law therein, by which to pronounce judgment, but simply for a statement of the doctrine of the church." But these liberal views of the freedom of belief were not retained. The confession of faith was soon converted into a formal, or paper-pope, as it has been called. It may however be answered, that, inconvenient or unfitting as formularies of faith may seem, they are indispensably necessary to the individual existence of the church, —to the support of unity, without which a church cannot exist; and that Calvin has proved this in his epistle to Somerset by arguments adapted to all times. The church must know what doctrines its preachers recognize as found in Scripture, whether the minister about to be received is a Christian, and does not conceal atheistic or antichristian opinions under the cloak of Scriptural expressions. On the other side, the state must also know what doctrine the church, which it protects, acknowledges. So too must the evangelical church distinguish itself from the catholic and the Greek communities; and they who will own the Bible only to be the palladium of unity, must make their confession, though in the briefest form,—"We receive the Scriptures only as the rule of faith." And this justifies us in further asking, "What do you understand by the Scriptures and faith?" and so on.

Here arises the question, in what manner should the church oblige its members to the confession of its faith? Should it seek

to restore the old unconditional method of compulsion, and again appeal to the arm of the state? Should it expel from the office of teachers those who do not adhere with sufficient exactness to the expressions of the symbol? Or should it take the opposite view, and let the formularies of faith alone, without regarding them, except as venerable monuments; and require only a general conformity, leaving the matter to God, and allowing "men's spirits," as Luther expresses himself, "to clash freely against each other," because that sooner or later this opposition, as church history shows, will resolve itself into the wished-for unity? Or, again, should the church adopt the views of those who contend, that such a unity as that spoken of is impossible; that the attempt to effect it would only produce hypocrisy, or, such being the vast difference of opinion, the separation of those who are too honest to sacrifice their own belief, and therefore are unwilling to adopt a symbol?

The proper solution of this difficulty is a right understanding of evangelical freedom. Thus it is absolutely false that the evangelical church pretends to an absolute, unconditional freedom. On the contrary, the freedom which it enjoys is defined by the blessed Scriptures, and by the Holy Spirit, which bridles our understanding. The members of the church who imagine that they may crush everything by their reasoning and their critical exegesis, without subjecting themselves in faith to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, belong not to the church of Christ, but to the world. True Christians submit themselves freely to the Scriptures, and consequently to the formularies of faith, the substance of which is found in Scripture. The contradiction is only apparent; the inconsequence is only a pretence. Luther and Calvin established a unity of doctrine, but according to Scripture, and with minds enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Councils decide on the sense of Scripture, and publish confessions of faith, and to these every one ought to submit himself. Calvin acknowledges the first four councils, because they are in agreement with the meaning of Scripture. It is not the thought of the individual which here determines the conformity of these councils to Scripture, but the man enlightened by God. We subscribe however to the decisions of councils or synods only according to the Spirit. In this manner both Christian freedom and the unity of the church may alike be secured. It is the spirit of Christ, and not the word, the formulary, or the mere dogma, which establishes this unity. One truth only

lives in the church, and they who seek it in the spirit will always agree in the main points of belief. This indeed seems but a slight bond of union, but it was the only possible one which Spener knew of in his times. A compulsory unity is in some respects a pure impossibility. The invisible unity of the church is grounded upon the truth, which is from God, and can be but one; but the visible depends upon the declarations of the assembled ministers of a church, which determine the measure of knowledge, but still can only be subscribed according to the Spirit. Without the existence however of these synods, it is impossible for the temporal power, strive as it may, to restore the lost unity of the church by a compulsory confession of faith. This is shown by the effect of the Prussian edict of July 9, 1788, the latest experiment of the kind.

Calvin found some confessions of faith already existing when he entered his church; as, for example, that of Zwingli addressed to Charles V. but without symbolic force; the *Confessio Tetrapolitana*, and the two Helvetic confessions, which have some symbolic authority. The first Helvetic confession was that of Mühlhausen, drawn up by Myconius; the second, which appeared in 1536, was framed by Bullinger, Myconius and Grynæus, and of this Ruchat says, "It is that which we call the first Helvetic confession, to distinguish it from another more extended one, drawn up in 1566." In the whole we find that there were four complete confessions of faith existing in Calvin's time, in his reformed church. First, there was that prepared by Farel, in conjunction with Calvin, at Geneva. It consisted of twenty-one articles, and to this the citizens were obliged to swear in 1536, but it possessed no proper symbolic authority. Secondly, there was the third Helvetic confession, of the year 1566, which was occasioned by the resolutions of the *Consensus Tigurinus* of the years 1549, 1551 and 1554. This was in reality the earlier one of 1536, but modified by Bullinger, Beza and Gualter: it was subscribed by all the Swiss churches, with the exception of that of Basil and Neuchatel: it is consequently the confession also of the Genevese church. Thirdly, there was the French confession, the origin of which is related in Beza's Church History, and in Crespin's Martyrology. The first congregation in Paris was formed in 1555. Under Henri II. the assembled parliament declared itself, almost without a dissentient voice, in favor of the new doctrine: many of its members were thrown into prison. But in the year 1559, when the



reformed assembled for the first time in a national synod, they set forth both their confession and their discipline in forty articles.\* This instrument is the same as that which, in 1561, was laid before Charles IX. and Catherine de Medicis at Poissy, and formed the symbolic writings of the old French reformed church. Fourthly, we find an excellently drawn-up confession, addressed by Calvin to the emperor of Germany and the prince of Condé, at Frankfurt, for the reformed church, but which has never had a symbolic character. The confession of the French church in forty articles is not to be compared to the masterpiece of Melancthon. It is however distinct and practical, and speaks so forcibly on the holiness of unity, and so correctly on the mystery of the Lord's Supper, that it would be difficult perhaps to find these subjects better explained. But the season of apostasy brought with it also apostasy from this confession, produced at the expense of such terrible struggles. In the present day the church of Geneva has determined to support itself without any form of confession, and it is a question whether it may not soon fall into fragments. In the canton of Neuchatel also the ministers only sign a promise, that they will teach the holy Scriptures according to their convictions, and they are apparently satisfied with the result. In the work of the preacher St. Vincent, at Nismes, against the first publication of La Mennais, it is also shown that the holy Scriptures alone must be the foundation of unity, and that without any aid from formularies of faith. So also it appears from the 'Archives du Chr. Dec. 1830,' that the Genevese consistory thus formally declared itself respecting confessions, in the moderator's address, on the 14th of January, 1819:—"It rejected all confessions of faith." The preacher Heyer, in a pamphlet published in 1818, against confessions, and whilst the controversy with the separatists was going on, says that the confession now needed is the following:—"The holy Scriptures are the only rule of our belief, and there is no unfailing interpreter of this rule on earth."

This therefore is the end, at Geneva, of that noble, heart-felt confession which existed for so many generations, and was sealed by the blood of so many of the members of Jesus Christ; of that holy conflict, the object of which was to restore the old church assemblies, that the true unity in the Lord might again be established, both outwardly and spiritually.

\* Beza, Hist. Eccles. l. ii, pp. 173-185.

## CHAPTER VII.

CALVIN'S CATECHISM.—HIS LITURGICAL ORDER.—OUTWARD WORSHIP: ITS RELATION TO THE ARTS.—PSALM-SINGING IN THE REFORMED CHURCHES.—CALVIN'S EXCESS IN REFORM: COMPARED WITH VINCENTIUS DE PAULA.

WHATEVER difference of opinion may exist as to formularies of belief, few persons will fail to agree with Calvin on the necessity of some book of instruction for the people. His first catechism, written in French, appeared in 1536, and in Latin in 1538. It was taken from the 'Institutes,' and was intended for adults.

Calvin's next popular writing, his catechism for children, has been attended with extraordinary blessings, as has been the case with Luther's smaller works, as the numerous translations of them prove. They appeared first in French in 1541, and then in Latin in 1545, possessing a symbolic character.

It was disputed in the French synods whether this elementary work should be received entire, or whether some expressions in it should not be altered; and it was resolved to adopt it unchanged. But Calvin's catechism, with his doctrine and his memory, has altogether vanished out of France. The rationalistic catechism of the Genevese preacher Vernet has supplied the place of the Calvinistic. In other churches, that of the not too much to be despised catechism of Osterwald has been adopted in its room. And surely it may be reckoned among the follies of our age, that it troubles itself with numberless experiments to form a new catechism, which it will never accomplish, the best work of this kind being already in existence. The new one consequently, if compared with this, can only prove unsatisfactory, colorless and insipid.

The catechism for children, published in 1541, is divided into portions for fifty-five Sundays; so that Calvin had prepared the course of catechetical instruction for more than a year, as the shortest period in which it could be completed. Although Luther, as the man of the people, is so incomparable in his writings, this little work of Calvin has great excellences in respect to the order and progress of the ideas. The fundamental

principle, as in all Calvin's works, is a living faith in God : upon this all the rest depends. He does not therefore, like Luther, first explain the law, then faith and prayer, without a fundamental or ruling idea, but he says at the beginning :—

“What is the true and right confession of God ?

“When we know Him, so as to honor Him.

“What is the right way of honoring Him ?

“1. That we put our trust in Him.

“2. That we serve Him, being obedient to his will.

“3. That we seek Him in all our necessities, and look for salvation and happiness in Him.

“4. That we acknowledge both with our lips and with our heart that all good comes from Him.”

The ground of a genuine trust in God consists in this, that we know Him in Jesus Christ. This leads—

1. To the explanation of the Apostles' creed, which is considered as divided into four parts, referring to the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost and the church.

2. From the belief, the author proceeds to the consideration of works, of repentance, of the law, and the ten commandments. Then follows an account of the worship of God, which consists in doing His will, and keeping the great commandment.

3. From the law, he passes on to explain the nature of prayer, God's help being needed to enable us to do God's will.

4. The “Our Father” affords a subject for the fourth article, and for the praise of God, as the source of all good, and as the giver to his church of his holy Word and sacraments.

On the whole, if the Lutheran catechism be more original in its kind, this of Calvin's is better adapted for all classes. The Heidelberg catechism, compiled by Ursinus and Olevian, is founded on a totally different plan : 1. it proceeds from the acknowledgment of man's misery ; 2. it treats of his deliverance through faith, and it connects the whole confession of faith with the sacraments ; then, 3. it speaks of thankfulness and love to God, as the source of our conversion and sanctification ; and the work ends with an exposition of the ten commandments, and “Our Father.”

Calvin regarded it as most important, for the safety of the church, to establish a durable order through uniformity in liturgical rites, and thereby to oppose effectually the wilfulness of individuals. But even here he would suffer nothing which was not in strict conformity with the Scriptures. He in all things

exhibited the purest antagonism to Rome; and as the papists made the central point of their religious services the mass, a wonder invented by men, so Calvin employed the exposition of the Bible as the middle point of the devotions of his church. Again, as in catholicism the body of Christ is brought forth at the powerful word of the priest, who thus plays the principal part in the ceremony; so in the protestant congregation the corresponding part is taken by the minister, who reads and expounds the Word. But while the mass proclaims to the people the presence of God, and, apart from all errors, awakens in them, as well-instructed Christian catholics, a deep feeling of devotion to God or Christ, so will the distinction of the two kinds of worship, the one characterized by prayer, the other by teaching, be found in Scripture. The catholics do not indeed altogether neglect instruction, nor do the protestants fail in earnest worship and devotion by prayer and singing. But still, in the protestant church the means of edification depend mainly on the individual ability of the preacher, who, if he be unfit for the office, deprives the whole service of its value, which cannot be the case if the presence of the body of Christ, and his renewed sacrifice, be the groundwork of the edifice. But among the catholics divine worship has degenerated into superstition, while among the protestants it has been lost in dry polemics and vain discussions; and hence, on both sides, God's service has seemingly been rendered useless. Onesidedness reigns in both churches, the service in neither comprehending as it ought the whole man, nor answering all the wants of the soul. In these agitated times therefore, in which the old forms are destroyed, an effort has been made to blend them together in one. In the new Prussian Agende, the sermon is distinct from the liturgy, which, by confession of sin, prayer and singing, is made an introduction to the worship of God, which in our church recedes; and when the Lord's Supper follows upon the sermon (or instruction), the three liturgical elements, confession, teaching and prayer, the highest in religion, and the bond of our spiritual union with Christ, crucified for us, are all present for our edification. In another profoundly-conceived liturgical experiment, arising from the Agende, these elements are combined together in one, and the result is presented in three parts. The Sunday service begins with an act of penitence and confession; then follows the sermon, and afterwards the prayers, with singing and responses. These three elements are also found in the



Calvinistic liturgy,—confession of sins, preaching, prayer and singing,—but the preaching occupied the most important part of the service. Still there was wanting that which was so imposing in the mass, the feeling of the sacrifice of Christ. On this account the Lord's Supper should have been celebrated, in conformity with the Scripture rule, at all times of public service, or at least have been announced. This is founded on the principle, that no religion can exist without a sacrifice; and certain it is, that the reformers in the south went too far in abolishing rites, while the Lutheran church retained a host of ceremonies connected with the Lord's Supper, and a liturgical service for the mass at the altar.

In the year 1543, that is, soon after his return, Calvin established the liturgy, which still constitutes the foundation of the liturgies of the reformed church. The customary prayers appear among his writings in old French: we especially remark the confession of sins, extracted from the mass-book, and forming the beginning of the service, and also the preparation for the sacrament. It is cause for rejoicing that both these prayers have been partly preserved in the new liturgies.

The confession of sins and the singing of psalms were followed by an extempore prayer, before the sermon. Calvin however seems usually to have repeated one of his own, there being found in the old edition of his sermons on the book of Job, the *Prière que fait ordinairement M. Jean Calvin au commencement de ses sermons, et la prière qu'il fait en la fin de chacun sermon*. He may perhaps have employed this form in those weekday services at which he preached, and when the liturgical form was of a freer kind, the prayer after sermon not being liturgical. The discourse again was followed by prayer, by confession of sins, by singing, and the blessing.

The simple celebration of the Lord's Supper, according to the Calvinistic form, with its profoundly impressive liturgy, and as it is still observed in all the reformed, and partly in the united, churches, concludes with the song of Simeon, and exhibits throughout a remarkable contrast to the splendid solemnity of the catholic mass. In the one, we have the spiritual presence of Christ, and hearts bowed beneath the roof of the plainest of edifices; in the other, the splendors of art, a choir of hired singers, the rich colors of the priestly garments, and the dark belief in a miracle. Let any one read Madame de Stael's\* description of

\* Allemagne. Génie du Chr.

the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the little village of Saigny, near Geneva, and, written as it was by one who fully apprehended the earnestness and holiness of the Calvinistic service ; let it be compared with Chateaubriand's enthusiastic picture of the Romish mass, in which all kinds of liturgical elements are mixed together ; and it will be felt that the reading of the epistle and Gospel, which is connected with the preaching, breaks like an interruption upon the prayers.

The reformed church has retained nothing pertaining to art, but the singing of psalms, and with difficulty the organ. Thus the principle is established, that everything which strongly acts upon the outward senses ought to be carefully excluded from the service of God. The Lutherans have retained in some of their churches, as things unobjectionable, the altar, the crucifix, paintings and monuments, and even some part of the ceremonial of the mass, though without the offering. But the evangelical churches, being peculiarly places of prayer, are closed on the week-days, and are only opened when the clergyman, as the centre of the whole, is present ; and thus the pious custom of the people, at whatever hour of the day they passed, whether before or after work, to enter the church and pray, is, alas ! forgotten. The doors of the Lutheran church might surely have been left open : there the altar and the crucifix, as symbols of the presence of God, are still retained. Hence Bossuet\* is not incorrect in charging the protestants with carrying things to excess in this respect : he quotes a letter written by Erasmus, in which the latter says jestingly, " These people burn the house, in order to clear it of rubbish."

It will be difficult to preserve this sober form of protestant worship in these later times : originally it was necessary as a scourge to superstition, but it is not expressive of the living feeling of believing man. As soon as he finds himself on a higher step in the way of spiritual advancement, he thankfully offers his God the best and noblest worship he can practise or conceive. At the same time he occupies too lofty a stand to be in danger of falling into superstition ; and he is as little likely to yield to its influence in his worship, as he is disposed to be superstitious in the midst of the rich and sacred scenes of nature, where no such feelings move him, though all his impressions are received from outward things. It is also probable that a new spirit, and the victory of Christian feeling in the protestant church, may

\* Variat. c. v. p. 195.

restore the cross to its place as a symbol; and not only in sacred edifices, but by the roadside, and on the rocky summit of the mountain, where the wanderer, or the traveller returning to his home, may greet it from afar and breathe his prayer. And, if the works of creation proclaim to us the glory of God, why should not this sign be allowed to remind us of his love, and of our redemption from the curse of sin? He who contemplates nature in her glory, can readily imagine man passing his life in paradise; but he forgets that a curse is resting upon the earth, and that the creation has shared the fall of man,—a thought expressed by Calvin, and which greatly affected Wesley. In the sign of the cross we recognize the long history of human suffering, the salvation offered to our race, and that sad mystery of our life which faith alone can resolve.

The reformers, who clearly understood what was most important to the general edification, not only discontinued the use of Latin in singing, but introduced the practice of congregational singing. Calvin expresses himself on this subject as follows:—“If the singing come not from the heart, it is worth nothing, and can only awaken God’s wrath. Singing in itself is good and useful: our tongues must praise God, and as we honor him by a common faith, we must also unite in glorifying him before men, that they may hear our confession of his name, and be inspired with the desire of following our example. Singing in the church has been practised from the earliest times: the apostle Paul recommended the use of spiritual songs. But neither the ear nor the spirit must be distracted. Augustine remarks, that he preferred the style recommended by Athanasius, which was rather speaking than singing: but the latter awakened feelings in the highest degree edifying to his soul. With proper moderation therefore the use of singing is holy and useful. Those melodies which are introduced merely to give pleasure, are not agreeable to the majesty of the church, and must be infinitely displeasing to God.”

Calvin therefore introduced the singing of psalms as soon as possible into his church, this being authorized by Scripture, and the glorious soul-felt sublimity of the prophets filling him with delight. The French poet Marot translated in the first instance thirty of the psalms, and with great ability; he translated twenty more in Geneva: the other hundred were, at Calvin’s request, translated by Beza. A little time after, these psalms were trans-

\* Instit. lib. iii. c. 20, sec. 31, 32.

lated into German, and were sung in many of the German reformed churches, and in those of the Netherlands. The old French version, to which we have referred, is a wonderful production, for it is impressed with the inimitable characteristics of a profound religious feeling. All the later translations, however much more carefully executed, are useless when compared with this. The melodies to which they were sung were equally simple and profound, and consequently inimitable. Certain it is that religious feeling has its peculiar language. The songs of J. B. Rousseau, even those of Racine in *Athalie* and *Esther*, taking them all together, have not the pathos of one of these old psalms; nor will an erudite *Stabat Mater*, in its most masterly perfection, ever satisfy, as they do, the thirst of the soul longing for salvation. This will account for the deep impression which these solemn compositions made on the minds of even worldly men, and on those of catholics in France at the time of their appearance. It is highly characteristic of the spirit of the age, that Marot's psalms were sung with success at the court of Francis I., and later, at that of Francis II., and the formidable Catherine. Every one at the court had his favorite psalm, which he sang in the style most pleasing to himself. Catherine of Medicis herself followed this custom. King Henri II. sang, while hunting, the psalm, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks;" and the king of Navarre, "Lord avenge me," &c. The Sorbonne sought in vain to persuade Francis to suppress the translation. Even in Paris the congregational singing of psalms produced the deepest impression upon the people, when first made acquainted with the earnest, solemn melodies to which the sacred words were set. Such singing therefore in the French language was soon after forbidden, a penalty of two hundred francs being exacted of any one who should break this law.

In Germany also those hymns only are effective in the church which were composed in times of strong religious excitement. The old hymns as now altered are like venerable gothic edifices, with modern additions, or covered with glaring paint. Our Luther, who had a genuine musical feeling, opened the path for German church-singing, and his whole soul poured itself wonderfully forth in the mystery of this noble art. Calvin has only left some few remarks in praise of music. Luther in this respect stands higher: he would not separate the art from religion, and in the preface to his spiritual songs he says, "I am



not of opinion that all kinds of art should be cast down and trodden under foot by the Gospel, as some fanatics would have it ; but I would have all the arts, especially that of music, devoted to it, and employed in its service."

It was a happy circumstance that a Lucas Cranach lived at Wittenberg in Luther's time. He had it in his power to represent all the great evangelical characters and events of the time in his pictures, and in doing so he greatly promoted the value of his art. In France, in Geneva and Zurich, there was no such a man, and an indifference to painting was the consequence.

To the assertion, however, so frequently advanced, that the reformation was peculiarly hostile to the development of art, because the service which it established does not require, as that of the catholic church, any aid of this kind, any such means for exciting devotion, or exhibiting the invisible ideal under visible forms for the edifying of the people ; or because, on the other side, the reformation promotes thought and inquiry, which are enemies to imagination, and has therefore produced philosophers and artistic theorists, but no great practical artists,—to the assertion thus advanced, the fact itself is directly opposed. The protestant church has never been a mere negative antagonism to error, but is a living and divine energy, essential to the salvation of the world, and has only degenerated into a cold principle of thought where the vital faith has ceased. Wherever the living breath of an original power is felt, there too will poetry and art be ever in process of development. This poetic force was not expressed or shown in the earlier struggles of the protestant church, because the service then introduced was too simple to need the aid of the painter ; but there is another province of art, that of poetic power, and in this the catholic church has no religious epos like the protestant church. And where has music ever cherished nobler or sublimer spirits than those produced by the latter ? If sculpture, painting, and architecture were for some time but little regarded in the protestant church, may not this be attributed to deeper and more general causes ? Even catholic countries were scarcely, at the period referred to, much more fruitful in this respect, the power of faith being universally depressed. But it is beyond dispute, that a poetic energy has grown out of our poor, our dry and abused church ; and that, consequently, this living spirit will return as soon as the new spiritual edifice shall be properly advanced.

Evident is the folly of those artists who, belonging to the

evangelical communion, treat with contempt the peculiar and original energy of their church, the lofty poesy of the reformation, and the reformed, and who embrace the catholic belief to awaken their artistic genius by a stroke of magic, by the outward influences of a worship which, now dead in itself, only lives by means of a dazzling poetic ornament.

The constitution of the catholic church attaches its members to the priesthood by the practice of confession; but it unites them with the church itself, which alone confers salvation, by a belief in the treasures of the good works of the saints, and which it has the power of dispensing to its people. The merit of good works, of pilgrimages, of asceticism, of the worship of saints, of prayer to the mother of God, whose intercession is so much desired, is intimately connected with this fundamental idea. By the principle of individual liberty, asserted among protestants, the bond between the clergy and the people must necessarily be loosened. So too the idea of the merit of good works falls to the ground, through the doctrine of justification by faith. In the reformed church every one must labor for his own salvation, not the church for him. "Another cannot believe for you," says Luther; and it is faith only which justifies.

The union of the clergy with the people was undoubtedly one of the most attractive characteristics of the catholic institution. But even this, under the power of the hierarchy, was capable of being perverted to injurious ends. Luther's Confession\* shows how the church employed it, and wounded the consciences of those who confessed their sins, without affording them any comfort. Still pastoral care is impossible without confession. Luther accordingly allowed a free confession to be practised. The care of souls therefore is easier for the Lutheran than for the Calvinistic clergy; since where the practice is not consecrated by the authority of the church, it will be difficult for the minister to produce the necessary dispositions by the mere personal influence which he may possess. Wesley found it necessary to restore the use of confession.† Calvin himself felt the mischief of a separation of the clergy from the people, and very often recommended a free confession, which never, however, prevailed in his church, in order by this, and the visitation of the sick, to compensate for the want of the other. The same object was contemplated in the admonitions which the censors or elders ad-

\* Luther's Werke, Auswahl, t. x. pp. 334-46.

† See Southey's Life of Wesley.

dressed to the people in their own homes, a practice which Calvin instituted some years later, when he saw how little profit the people gained from church-going, or from mere public preaching. But these private visits can never supply the obligation of regular confession, which converts the connection between the people of the parish and the pastor into that of a father and his children, and necessarily creates and establishes confidence.

And further : not only must that earnest feeling which proceeds from this relation be more or less sacrificed in the protestant church, but also that joyous life which was connected with the catholic festivals, and which Zwingli, Farel, and Calvin so disturbed by their abridgment of the holidays. Thus, while the Lutheran church retained even the least of the festivals in the ecclesiastical year, the reformed church could with difficulty retain the four high festivals, the preachers not even alluding to the rest in their discourses. Calvin was neither in favor of, nor absolutely against, the festivals ; but was obliged to yield to the common wish of the people.\* He was once slanderously accused of wishing to abolish the Sabbath : against this statement he defended himself, and showed in a letter to Haller how the report arose. Farel and Viret had at first pursued the practice of noticing the festivals which had occurred in the week, on the following Sunday. After the expulsion of the ministers, these festivals were celebrated on the original days. On Calvin's return, and when he was strenuously endeavoring to establish his reformation according to the Gospel, he appointed, though regarding the observation of the festivals as a matter of indifference, certain hours for prayer on those days, and during which the shops were to be kept closed. At noon every one was to return to his usual occupations. Christmas-day was the only festival retained. The council, however, without asking him, abolished in 1551 all the attendant solemnities.

In the Lutheran church the *Pericope* have been retained ; they have vanished from the reformed church, and with them all marks of the ecclesiastical year. Even the solemn evening prayer, by which the church in early times sought to awaken the souls of the people to devotion, has been suppressed, from the dread of superstition. But who can fail to be moved with

\* In the register of December 19, 1544, we find the following notice :—  
“Christmas-day shall be celebrated as usual ; though Calvin has represented to the council that it would be as well to dispense with this festival as with the other three.”

a feeling of delight, in catholic countries, when he listens in the evening to the sound of the vesper-bell, announcing the Ave Maria, and when he beholds every Christian around him bowed in silent prayer ! How must he regret that the stern reformers, when they rejected that degenerate devotion, cast away at the same time all that was connected with it of the true, the sublime, and the beautiful, and could find nothing to supply its place ?

But the superstition of the catholic church had set forth the worship of the mother of God, with the holy child, as the one thing needful. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, that this error should be rooted out, before the pure worship of God, in spirit and in truth, could be restored. But protestants, in forgetting the mother of God, have also forgotten the pure and holy Christian woman, and have conceived the most angry disdain in contrast to the early idolatry. Luther himself did not refuse to acknowledge her high worth, but regarded her as venerable : he greeted her with the beautiful words, "Thou highly-favored," &c., interpreting the whole of the song with an expression of deep feeling. Calvin also, though not especially distinguishing her, yet always mentions her name with reverence and tenderness : he calls her "the glorious Virgin," *la glorieuse Vierge*. What place the Holy Ghost will give to the mother Mary, in the development of the new church, time will show.

What we have said of the holy Virgin will equally apply to all the saints. That there is a holy band, that they pray for us, and that their prayer has its effect, is certain. Hence the beautiful conviction of Calvin, that the angels and saints are continually watching over us. But the protestant church, in order to uproot abuses, has, alas ! banished the memory of the saints from our belief, and this, though we profess in our confession to acknowledge the communion of saints in heaven. It is only very lately that the funeral solemnities have been allowed their proper place in the Prussian church Agende, and with them the prayer for the dead ; and this has been done rather from a patriotic than a religious motive. The remembrance, however, of those who have fallen in war, naturally associates itself with that of those who earlier died the death of the blessed.

The monastic life necessarily ceased with the belief in the merit of good works.

Calvin found the convents already destroyed when he came



to Geneva. The Benedictine monastery of St. Victor, where a few monks of the order of Clugni resided, but who embraced the reformed doctrine, was early suppressed: their abbot was the celebrated Bonnivard, so long a prisoner in the castle of Chillon. The Dominican and Augustin monasteries were also destroyed with the district of St. Victor. This suppression of the convents was necessary at the time; but no Christian mind will refuse to confess, that there is something consolatory in the idea of monastic life, in that escape from the distractions of the world, which might allow the wearied spirit to give itself up, for some few years, in quietness to God; and that it is the abuse only, the excess, which deserves reprobation. Places of refuge are as necessary for the sick in mind as for the sick in body,—for those who can find neither rest nor help in the world, and who can no longer feel at home there, because, occupied with its business and its pleasures, it cannot understand their sorrows. The notion of the merit of works was the sin, and the vow for life was the abuse, of these institutions. An existence, subjected for some years to rule, and spent under spiritual inspection and guidance, is for the sick in soul, suffering under the consciousness of sin and folly, and thirsting in the long struggle of faith for help, an unspeakable benefit, nay an almost indispensable necessity. Yet three centuries have passed away, and the evangelical church has not yet felt itself free enough to understand this language again, and to establish, on a protestant foundation, Christian societies for these sublime objects. The want was felt even in Wesley's time.\*

The idea of monastic life was once revived in Geneva after the reformation. In the year 1666 a proposal was made to establish a *retraite spirituelle*, or a convent for single women; but the plan was never adopted. A glance at a man who appeared in France soon after Calvin's time, and who did for the revival of monastic life, in the highest sense of the word, that which our own church reformers ought to have done among us, shows plainly what a fair side there was even in the catholic development of Christianity. This man was Vincentius of Paula, raised up by Providence in times of discord and terror, to afford some measure of help to distracted France. Vincentius recognized the pure apostolic spirit of Scripture: he availed himself of the last sparks of divine fire which still glimmered under the ashes

\* See Southey's Life of Wesley.

in his church, and fanned them into a holy flame. He was all love; and while Calvin always proves himself the stern, severe enemy of error, Vincentius overlooked all errors, knew nothing of polemics, and only desired to accomplish good by the most benevolent means, and to do his duty in the position in which he stood. Calvin stormed against sinners, and those enemies who sought by destroying him to destroy the Gospel. Vincentius, on the contrary, once knelt down before a man who had given him a box on the ear, openly in the street, and begged his pardon if he had injured him. By this act of Christian humility he converted his enemy. The one would have truth, without which no love is possible; the other would have love, which leads to truth. The former laid the axe to the root of the corrupt tree, and thus awakened the new fresh life, through which catholicism even was re-invigorated, while without it protestantism could never have borne any fruit. All must yield to his stroke, because all was infected with error. Vincentius, on the other hand, showed how the spirit of Christian love could diffuse a blessing, even amid the restraints of superstition and the abuses of monastic life, and of what self-devotion a man might be capable, though a monk. The order of the Sisters of Mercy, which he established, rose again, in its purity and gentleness, to light, from the very slough of the revolution: so also the House of Lazarus, *La Retraite Spirituelle*, founded by him, bore glorious fruit even to the end of the last century. The following generation ought to have considered these facts, and imitated the example thus set. Wesley shows us that a voluntary resignation and subjection to a strict rule, but without vows, may produce noble results, and beyond all expectation, on the path of protestantism. The methodists at first established free unions for the diffusion of their faith, and Francis of Assisi never received a profounder obedience from his followers than did Wesley. But instead of endeavoring to give this noble, practical tendency to the church, Calvin's dialectic passion prevailed,—salutary, indispensable indeed for his own times, but in many respects, too one-sided, and a real phenomenon in the history of the church. While a pure apostolic life flourished under Vincentius in reprobate France, the protestants were contending obstinately at Dort, in the reformed Netherlands, on points connected with the deep mystery of eternal election, and were persecuting their opponents, forgetting, in their zeal for

the moral reform which interested their feelings, that the pure apostolic spirit is the true sign of election.\*

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## CHAPTER VIII.

CALVIN'S PASTORAL LABORS.—CHARACTERISTIC OF HIS PRACTICAL EFFORTS.—HIS LABORIOUS LIFE.—HIS EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE.—CALVIN AS A PREACHER.

HAVING thus considered the legislation and ecclesiastical constitution introduced by Calvin, we have now to contemplate the reformer in his theocratic labors as a pastor; and this leads us to notice his peculiarly practical exertions, and his active course of life, which will complete the sketch of his character as given in the first part of the work.

As the breath of eternal life seems to breathe through the whole of this great man's undertakings, so is it most conspicuously discoverable in his profound compassion for souls, and in his love for fallen humanity. We have not a mere scholar before us, but a feeling man, who exerted his utmost strength for all, and in every sphere desired the means of employing his active energies. Even his exegetical writings have a practical tendency: his sermons insist upon a holy conduct. We may even assert, that he did more as a practical man, than as a theologian, by his system. His severity, the discipline and purity which he required, as well as his own holy life, secured him the confidence of all, and thus the deed availed in reality more than the word.

Although his correct instinct led him to embrace a true phi-

\* Vincentius was born in the village of Pouy in Gascoigne, in 1576, twelve years after Calvin's death. He was the founder of the following institutions:—1. The sisterhood of charitable women for the visitation of the poor. 2. The Missionary Institute of France, for the revival of the church. 3. The *Hospice des Magdelaines*. 4. The institution of Priest-Conferences for the admonition of the younger clergy. 5. A Foundling Hospital. 6. The House of Lazarus, in which principally priests were prepared as missionaries to go about the country, and re-awaken by their sermons the slumbering piety of the people. 7. The institution for the conversion of females. The members were the *Sœurs de Charité*, and the institution has excited the admiration even of infidels. And 8. The seminary for young theologians.

losophy,\* as not inconsistent with faith, yet he always found it necessary to oppose those philosophers whose systems had more to do with the head than the heart. It is characteristic of him, that the logical force of his mind, which carried thought to its utmost limits, is contrasted with a child-like simplicity in the conduct of his daily life. The commonest domestic circumstances were attended to by him with almost the same earnestness and zeal as a dogmatic system.

His early study of jurisprudence may have given him this love for the practical; and though he had no taste for the science in his youth, he was chiefly indebted to it for the great foresight, the skill and penetration, which rendered his council in all the affairs of life so valuable, uniting as he did Christian rectitude with prudence. As an example of the zeal with which he devoted his attention to the smallest as well as to the greatest concerns, making this the rule of his conduct, we instance the care with which, while pressed with important business, he recommended a servant-maid to Farel. Numberless points occur in his correspondence with the count of Fallais, whom he invited to Geneva, and let him a house with a garden for twelve dollars. He further arranged that he was to be responsible for the repairs, in case he bought it, and was to pay forty dollars. The garden and vineyard were especially noticed. He sent him the new-made wine, bought and sold a ton of superior wine, &c. Many other little matters are spoken of which he might easily have left to his wife, but which show how circumspectly, prudently and usefully he would have acted in whatever station he had been placed. His correspondence contains a vast number of letters of recommendation written for different young people, whom he particularly recommended to Viret in Lausanne, knowing that they might most readily obtain support in Bern. These letters are composed with great care and indulgence.

In the dedication of his works, he had always in view the especial practical end of forming a friendship with the chief men in Europe, and rousing them to a conscientious effort for the kingdom of God. This is illustrated by his epistles to Francis I. and the kings of Denmark, Sweden, and others. There was an especial worth in this; and the dedications continued to exercise their influence, even when the persons to whom they were addressed had no further intercourse with him,

\* See Ep. xciv. to Bucer. Amst. p. 50.



or the church, as was the case with the lord of Fallais. Nor did he refuse the correspondence of children or women. His letter to Ann, the eldest daughter of the Protector of England, is written in the gentlest style, and shows well how skilfully he could accommodate his earnest feelings to the youthful mind.

It may be said of Calvin that he was one of the few great men with whom it would not be difficult to live, supposing our intentions good. His character was fixed: he ever acted according to principle, without changeableness or caprice. It was only when he stood opposed to those whose will was perverse and wicked that he was irritable and passionate. This was frequently the case in the proceedings of the consistory. Hence the little instances of moroseness which occur in the state-protocols, and which expose his memory, even to the present day, to much hatred and calumny.

It is impossible to look without wonder at the literary labors of the reformers, Calvin, Melancthon and Luther. None of them was far advanced in years,\* but each had written remarkable and masterly volumes; and amid what cares, distractions and struggles! All three were employed as academical instructors; two of them as ministers and preachers. Luther brought up seven children, and Calvin had to contend with the most distressing bodily sufferings.

Calvin's whole life was spirit; the bodily element was greatly subdued in him. But notwithstanding the shortness of his life, he lived more than many whose course is long, since he lost no time in useless sleep, of which, like other extraordinary men, he required but little. When the day had been wholly occupied in business, the quiet hours of the night remained to him, and, allowing himself a brief repose, he would continue his labors. In his later years his spirit was not in the least degree troubled or weakened, as was the case with Luther, in the last weary years of his life. Calvin's weak bodily element was at last almost consumed by the inward fire of his soul. To form some idea of his activity, let us look at the letter which he wrote to Farel from Strasburg:—"I remember no day in this whole year in which I have been so pressed with such a variety of occupations. When the messenger was prepared to take the beginning of my work with this letter, I had about twenty leaves to look through. I had then to lecture and preach, to write four letters,

\* Luther was 63, Melancthon, 60, Calvin only 54 years old.

make peace between some persons who had quarrelled with each other, and answer more than ten people who came to me for advice. Forgive me therefore if I write only briefly of things."

In addition to his literary employments, he had in Geneva the customary engagements of which we have spoken,—the business of the court of morals or the consistory, that arising from the assembly of the clergy, and his connection with the congregation. Three days in the week he lectured on theological subjects, and every alternate week he preached daily. His excellent memory was a great help to him in all these labors. It is reported that he never forgot anything which pertained to his office, however much disturbed on all sides, or oppressed with applications. When writing a work, he could suspend the labor, devote some hours to the duties of his office, and then resume the thread of his discourse, without being obliged to read over what he had written.

An enemy to long speeches and useless words, he had, by the help of his lively genius, which was sharpened by study and the habit of dictation, acquired the habit of giving quick, brief, conclusive and dignified answers, and of speaking, generally, not much otherwise than he wrote.

As one of the watchmen of Israel, he was in perpetual conflict with secret and open enemies, so that Wolfgang Musculus compared him to a bow always strung. He carried on a correspondence which extended over all Europe, and still found time to translate most of his own learned works himself. He formed and sent forth preachers. The council charged him with numerous weighty affairs. He had frequent journeys to perform, and was consulted on all important subjects. These various occupations he continued to the end of his life, and even undertook occasionally the duty of his brother ministers, if the necessities of the church called them to a distance. He was never happier, according to his own statement, than when he was obliged to do many and important things. That he also took his share in the concerns of the city itself, we learn from the zeal with which he exerted himself during the plague; and afterwards, when the city in 1559 feared a siege, he set an example to the citizens by uniting with the professors and preachers in laboring at the fortifications. Let us add to all this, the consideration of his extraordinary faithfulness in the discharge of his pastoral duties, and how, for instance, he would not absent himself from his charge even while his wife was lying on her

death-bed. It was but seldom that he complained of the excessiveness of his labors, and he was always ready to do all for his friends. If they sent him their works to look through, he would find time, he said, to do it in the long nights. And yet, impressed with a feeling of duty, he speaks of his little labor; and in the discourse which he addressed, while dying, to the council, he refers with great humility to his exertions. He seems sometimes, at an earlier period, to have had no feeling of his activity, because he was sensible in himself of having still more force, and greater energies than he had occasion to employ. He worked with great rapidity, as he shows in his statement respecting his treatise against Sadolet. "I have not been able," he says, "to complete the translation of my address to Sadolet, for it was the labor of a whole day." It appears however that he was not always in the same humor for every kind of work: some things therefore would lie a long while unfinished.\*

Calvin readily let his friends see his works before he gave them to the public. Farel appears to have enjoyed his especial confidence in this respect. Thus he writes to him, Dec. 28, 1547, during the troubled times of the Interim, and the disturbances in Geneva:—"My Antidote to the Tridentine Decrees begins already to afford me some satisfaction, seeing that it pleased you so well, even before I was myself contented with it. Knowing my daily toils and struggles, which do not merely assail, but may rather be said to consume me, you are perhaps inclined to excuse its want of perfection. I cannot but feel surprised that anything worth reading should fall from my pen." He was especially anxious to have Farel's judgment on every point connected with his exposition of the Book of Genesis: he sent to him at the same time the contents of his work '*De Scandalis*.'

In a letter to Farel, dated August, 1545,† he describes how greatly he was affected by the interest which his friend Des Gallars, whom he highly valued, took in his labors:—"If you find that Caroli is convinced of his error, you must thank me and Gallasius for it. Little was wanting to induce me to let him bark on without interruption, for I feared that the kind of argument we should employ might awaken suspicion among

\* Ep. MSS. Gen. Oct. 1546. "The Essay '*De Scandalis*' was for some time discontinued, for my thoughts would not flow, and I had no heart to resume it till I had finished the Epistle to the Galatians." Other remarks occur to the same effect.

† MSS. Gen.

some. The die however is now cast : may the affair prosper ! I was rejoiced indeed when we had once begun, and, free from restraint, flew at once to the conclusion. The only cause of this facility was, that, under a feigned name, I could play with more ease and gaiety.”\*

Several indications occur of his bad health, which obliged him to make the greatest exertions to perform the duties of his active life. Thus he writes to Viret, May 3, 1548 : “When our Merlin came yesterday, he found me in bed : I was suffering from a headache ; for three days I had struggled against it, but the disorder at last conquered. Nevertheless I got up and went to the messenger from Bern. Soon after seven I returned ; but I felt that the unpleasant motion of the horse, and my having been too long without food, had done me harm. The pain returned, and more sharply than before. I preached with great difficulty : this done, I went immediately to bed. I have told you all this, that you might excuse my too long delay.”

To Farel he writes,† Feb. 4, 1550 : “The whole time our Thomas was here I was cruelly persecuted by a cough or cold. I am now troubled with an ague, but about an hour ago it began to leave me. It is well that I do not cease to drag myself about hither and thither, and to fulfil my most necessary duties : but I do it but slowly, according to my ideas, and much time is lost which ought to be employed in useful labors.”

In a letter which he wrote shortly before his death to the physicians at Montpellier, he shows what a host of sufferings had assailed him in his latter years, and it astounds us to find that, with bodily organs so shaken, the force of his spirit could accomplish so much. Seven different disorders are mentioned as combining their strength to crush him at the last, but which he bore with the utmost patience. The real greatness of the man is shown in his agony : he lets no vain complaint escape him, but speaks of his body as of a strange element.‡

\* The author observes on this, that he cannot determine with any certainty to what writing Calvin here alludes. He thinks it possible the reference might be to a work which appeared under the name of Des Gallars, entitled ‘Pro Gul. Farello et Collegis ejus adversus Petri Caroli Theologastri Calumnias, Defensio Nicolai Gallasii.’ 8vo. 1545. (Sénéb. t. i. p. 342.) Des Gallars was subsequently a preacher in Paris and London. He was with Beza in Poissy, presided at the synod held in Paris in 1565, and lastly was preacher to the queen of Navarre. 1571.

† MS. Goth. Bretschn. p. 29. He also writes on the subject of his ill health to Farel, Nov. 18, 1549. “Domo non sum egressus quia *hemicrania* jam triduum me atrociter infestant.”

‡ See the Amsterdam edition of his works, t. ix. p. 172. Also Ed. Laus. Ep. 343.



It is one of Calvin's characteristics, well worthy of notice, that he felt the necessity of constantly communicating with his friends. Hence arose his numerous correspondence, which was also the medium by which he kept up his connection with the whole church, and exercised a universal influence. Thus we find letters of all kinds and on all subjects; they amount to about twelve hundred. The opinions expressed in them have been already indicated. Many of his letters are still dispersed about: they are not always of importance, but simply show the necessity which he felt of living with his friends. Luther, in his letters, keeps more to one great object which he had in view, writes numerous business letters, and perpetually repeats the grand ideas which moved his spirit. He was less influenced by the necessity of communicating with private or individual friends. So too he appears to have been less regular; one might almost say that he was rough or rude in this respect. He occasionally offended, by a certain degree of coarseness, that tenderness of feeling, which Calvin, the more polite, the more cultivated man, never wounded.

Epistolary correspondence was with Calvin so much a duty and necessity, that he would sometimes, in the midst of pressing business, expend a whole day in writing to Farel from Strasburg, to inform him what news he had learnt from various parts of Europe. Hence he would upbraid his friends if they proved negligent in their correspondence. Instances of this occur in many of his letters to Viret and Farel. "Your negligence will not be easily pardoned," he says. To Viret's excuse he answers, that he ought simply to have pleaded for forgiveness. He often wrote without any particular reason, but simply to keep up his correspondence with Farel, who wished it, and whose desire in this respect Calvin was so glad to satisfy.

But Calvin's numerous correspondence strikes us as so much the more remarkable, when we think of the difficulty and expense with which it was carried on. Every letter which he wrote had to be conveyed by a special messenger, upon whose fidelity much depended. The messengers thus employed frequently travelled on horseback: they were also often detained at the place to which they carried the letters, waiting for the answer. During all this time they were living at the expense of those who sent them and the reformer had not rarely to meet the charges out of his own scanty means. We read in his letters how he was often broken in upon in the midst of his labors by some messenger, who was anxious to set off on his journey,

and for whom he was obliged immediately to prepare his letters. Many letters were lost, and even whole works which had been committed to the charge of strange travellers.

Calvin's style is not to be disregarded, as illustrative of the practical tendency of his character. It was with him not nature only, but principle, to think and to write clearly, in short, intelligible sentences. He scarcely ever indulged in long periods, which would have been difficult to the comprehension of a popular assembly. The report circulated by some of his admirers, that he read the works of Cicero through once a year, is certainly false: no trace exists of his having done so. His sententious style moreover is formed rather on another model, as on that of Seneca. That he was well acquainted with the literature of the ancients, though he but rarely cites them, is proved by his Latin style. The Latin language was to him, as to all the scholars of his time, almost his mother tongue, and he seems to have been more perfect in it than in the yet unpolished language of his fatherland. In the former he moves with elegance and grace, and breathes forth his thoughts in harmony with the language; while in the latter he is often harsh and perplexed. That tact, that delicacy of taste, which genuine cultivation alone can give, Calvin possessed in a far higher degree than our Luther; but still he was greatly excelled in this respect by Melancthon. Dignity of expression was peculiar to that remarkable man, as we see it exhibited sometimes even by unlearned writers, as for example, by some of the New Testament writers, who, enlightened and exalted by the Holy Spirit, avoided all that rudeness and superfluity of sentiments which are so opposed to a good style. In profane literature, the Greek tone and spirit which affected, without mastering, Calvin, have the closest analogy with this noble style of the holy Scriptures.

Calvin's style, even in his correspondence, is almost always classical through its very simplicity, and this notwithstanding his carelessness and occasional misuse of words. The character of a man may be commonly discovered in his style: this at least was the case with Calvin. In his mode of writing we recognize the same simplicity and candor which he shows in his inward and outward life. As he wrote without circumlocution, so spoke he in his life; and this beautiful simplicity of his style appears still more striking, when it is compared with the coquettish, pompous style of the writers of the following age. We have here also another proof of the truth, that the greatest

genius is always the most simple. No witticisms, no play of pretty antitheses, no superfluity of words can be found in Calvin : his only object is to make his subject, his thoughts, known, and he always finds the right word for this. But his correspondence, the moment of trusting confidence, the season of repose, exhibit most remarkably that clear simplicity of thought which formed the groundwork of his whole being. With the same simplicity he greeted the two little daughters of his friend Viret, and spoke clearly and tranquilly on the important affair of Servetus ; as if the one was as weighty a matter as the other, the least thing having with him as much worth as the greatest, all being in his eyes equally great and equally little.\* One feeling only governed him, the feeling of duty : for this alone he lived, and this was the ground both of his greatness and his repose. A certain degree of irony, a tendency to sarcasm, is discoverable, not in his letters, but in his polemical writings : instances of this may be found in his work against Westphal, and even in his sermons on Job. In his purely theological writings, the depth of his thoughts, his penetration, and the ardor of his convictions render him eloquent. He extemporized in the council with irresistible fire, and it was here that he found the most frequent incitements to oratory. His personal influence must have been rendered powerful by the circumstances already related ; but that he did not study or exercise rhetoric, as a common art, may be easily understood from his character. He was much too honest for this, and had too great a contempt for all that merely dazzles, to employ useless phrases. Of his love of brevity he himself says, in the 'Institutes,'† "I am by nature fond of brevity, and I could not probably attain to it, even were I to endeavor to acquire a more prolix style. Though it might be more agreeable to the reader, I could not employ it ; the work which I have undertaken requiring a pure and simple doctrine, delivered with the greatest brevity. And as philosophers lay down certain principles, from which they derive all particular duties, and the whole chorus of virtues, so also has holy Scripture its mode of teaching, which is infinitely better and safer than that of the philosophers. But there is this distinction ; the latter are wholly influenced by ambition and vanity, and have no other end in view but the display

\* See Drelincourt on this subject, p. 347 ; and the letter to Beza, Ep. 317, Ed. Amst. p. 159.

† Lib. iii. c. vi. s. 1.

of their skill and the subtlety of their understanding. They have accordingly endeavored to give lustre to their works by a careful use of method and arrangement. The Holy Spirit, on the contrary, who teaches without adornment or affectation, has not always followed this strict order and method. Since however he has in some cases done so, he has taught us thereby that we are not wholly to despise them."

These remarks, so worthy of respect, show us how superior this great man was to that species of oratorical art which rose to such a height in France and Switzerland, in the time of Louis XIV. Calvin, who, with his methodical spirit, allowed himself the free development of his ideas, believed that the Holy Spirit, who moves the mind, is superior to that ambitious desire of order in thinking, which satisfies the understanding but not the heart, and makes not men the better. Even in his theological and polemical works, which appear arranged with much art, the arrangement is not so exact, but that many repetitions are found in them. Art appears therein rather as the effect of natural genius than of design. In the Institutions which exhibit so much method in single parts, it is the spirit which rules, and one feels that the writer is borne along, not by thought merely, but by a higher influence on the progress of his ideas. Beza expresses himself to this effect on Calvin's eloquence, and in his observations on all the various circumstances of his life. He compares him with Farel and Viret, at the time of their first appearance, and says of Calvin, "*Tot verba tot pondera.*" Describing him in his last years, he speaks of him as "a despiser of great eloquence, and sparing in words; and as being thereby so good a writer that no one at that time had written with more dignity, with greater purity or acuteness."

To me the characteristics of his style appear most strikingly displayed in his dedication to Francis I., in his work against Sadolet, and in those parts of the 'Institutes' upon which he employed most care.

As preaching is the chief element in the protestant church, it was natural that the homeletic art should be highly cultivated in it. But the catholics afterwards became the rivals of the protestants in this respect, and surpassed them. Calvin knew nothing of that kind of preaching which was subsequently practised in France,—of that species of artificial discourse which it soon became the indispensable duty of the preachers in the reformed church to deliver. This species of preaching among the



protestants reached its highest degree of perfection in Saurin, who was celebrated for the force of his reasoning and his admirable and eloquent applications. The fashion thus introduced still prevails, and it seems as if the Gospel could only be proclaimed in this form. In Calvin's time also the French language, in respect to eloquence, was far behind the German. The reverse was the case at a later period, and pulpit eloquence reached its perfection in France: while in Germany, after the death of Luther, by whom it had been so successfully practised, it proportionally declined. The arrangement of the sermons of these times has been found fault with, and the mode of delivery continued to be heavy and monotonous up to the present age; in which the poets, having given a new character to the language, and Luther's pulpit writings being again read, the French have been frequently surpassed. Homiletics did not exist at the time of the reformation: the art of speaking, or speaking as an art, was utterly despised, and the inspired Word only was desired. This must be carefully borne in mind, to form a proper notion of Calvin's method of declaring the Gospel. We cannot assert of those times that the preachers were confined to a *finite circle of doctrines*, consisting of the mere elements of the faith; that books of sermons treated simply of belief and confession, and that the same materials were again brought forth in the treatment of morals. Such an assertion would certainly not be supported by a reference to Luther's sermons, which abound in original, awakening and practical ideas. Still less could it be defended by an appeal to those of Calvin, who always avoided the excess of dogmatic teaching, and, practical in all things, he was especially so in preaching. Taking Scripture for his guide, he follows its example, and inverts continually on action. He was also for the most part, attentive in his sermons to order and arrangement. Luther, on the other hand, observed no particular form, but allowed himself perfect liberty both in the plan and language of his discourses: sometimes speaking scholastically, in short sentences, and in an artificial order; at others neglecting all order, and pouring out his thoughts like a stream; sometimes calmly instructive, at others impetuous and angry; sometimes with, sometimes without, a text; often very long, at frequently very brief in his sermons; affording indeed a true image of his exuberant, fiery, rule-defying nature. Calvin was far more orderly in his discourses: he was always full of thought, and often exhibited a delicate criti-

cism, with uniform depth of judgment and solidity of learning. No less conspicuous are the warmth and originality of his ideas and expressions: and though a smile is sometimes provoked, one cannot follow without surprise and delight the course of his striking and powerful argument. Great wisdom, and with it ingenious satirical applications, intended to render disbelievers ridiculous in their own eyes, characterize his sermons. His style is remarkably simple, his method not synthetic: such at least is the case with his discourses, which commence with a proposition, from which he derives all the rest, generally by way of analysis: while he runs through whole books of Scripture, explaining a certain number of sentences in an instructive manner, and closing the whole with a prayer.

Several of his sermons, however, are on definite subjects. Calvin's pulpit exercises were generally weightier and more solemn than those of the German reformer, more impressive by the force of their inferences and striking sentences. Luther often unfolded his text dogmatically, and returned to it. Calvin kept his hearers, and objections which might be urged, more closely in view, and frequently wandered far from the text to answer the arguments of adversaries. That which gives a certain appearance of heaviness to his sermons is perhaps the manner in which they are usually read: those who peruse them rarely considering the discourse from beginning to end, or flying over the whole as it were in spirit, but employing themselves at every step with some weighty, striking thought. But every one who reads him must say, as was said of Demosthenes, "This man is right." However the pompous rhetoricians under Louis XIV. might ridicule his *simple*, simple manner, the time is come in which his rough, powerful style is preferred far above those regular, rounded, ornamented periods, which were so long regarded as the model of eloquence, but which, instead of awakening, only weary and depress the soul.

Calvin preached extempore: it is nowhere mentioned, at least, that he ever wrote a sermon. He himself says expressly, in an unpublished letter, "I did write the twenty-two sermons on the eighth psalm; but they have been printed simply as they could be gathered from my mouth, in the church. You here see our style and ordinary mode of teaching." He frequently also declares, that the power of God could only pour itself forth in extempore speech; and he expresses himself very disjectly and beautifully, in his letter to Somerset, against the reading of

sermons. "The people," he says, "must be taught in such a manner, that they may be inwardly convinced, and made to feel the truth of what the Apostle says, that the Word of God is 'a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.'\*" I say this to your Highness, because there is too little of living preaching in your kingdom, sermons there being mostly read or recited. I understand well enough what obliges you to adopt this habit. There are few good, useful preachers, such as you wish to have; and you fear that levity and foolish imaginations might be the consequence, as is often the case, of the introduction of a new system. But all this must yield to the command of Christ, which orders the preaching of the Gospel. And this preaching must not be dead, but living, and as Paul says to Timothy, 'for doctrine, for correction, for edification.' So that when a Christian enters the church, he may be moved to penitence, and be inwardly convinced, and so feel himself led to give honor to God. You know also how the Apostle speaks of the life of the Word in the mouth of the true and faithful servants of God. They ought not then to wish to shine in the ornaments of rhetoric, or to effect great things thereby; but the Spirit of God should be echoed by their voices, and so give birth to virtue. No possible danger must be permitted to abridge the liberty of the Spirit of God, or prevent his free course among those whom He has adorned with his graces for the edifying of the church."

On the power of eloquence, Calvin says, "You must take care, as far as possible, to have good trumpets, such as may penetrate deepest into the heart; for you are in danger of not reaping much fruit from any part of the reformation which you have effected, however good and holy the work, if this power of preaching be not more and more unfolded. It is not said without reason, that Jesus Christ 'shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and slay the wicked with the breath of his lips.†' This is the means by which the Lord will bind and destroy all his enemies, and hence the Gospel is called the kingdom of God. Although the edicts and laws therefore of princes are good auxiliaries, for the support of Christianity, God will make his dominion known by the spiritual sword of his Word, proclaimed by his ministers and preachers."

The four sermons against the Nicomedites, before cited, are

\* Heb. iv. 12.

† Isai. xi. 4.



grounded upon four texts, which seem to have been thoroughly considered; the discourses themselves, which are of moderate length, manifesting a clear progress of ideas. So too the 150 sermons on the Book of Job, which were delivered without preparation, are with few exceptions far from long. We may hence conclude that he found it expedient to exercise caution in this respect, and that he rarely preached more than half an hour. With a slow delivery, one of the above-mentioned four sermons might occupy three quarters of an hour. His practical discourses on the twelve minor prophets, and his sermons on the Epistles, are with some exceptions still shorter. Luther also has spoken very distinctly, and with originality, on the value of brevity.

Scaliger, who had heard Calvin, says, "Calvin being asthmatical, and speaking very deliberately, it is easy to write down all that he says." We therefore possess the very words which he used. Judging from his character and style, we might have supposed that he would have spoken with great fire, rapidity, and force; but it is certain that he often broke off, and made long pauses, to give the hearers time to consider his remarks.

His fame, or rather his endowments as an eloquent and impressive speaker, remained unimpaired to his latest years. The popularity of his preaching attracted the notice of the government; and it is especially mentioned in the register of the 19th of June, 1559, that a prodigious multitude of people attended the sermons of Calvin and Viret. Such, however, was the apostolic, pious feeling then reigning in Geneva, that every minister, without reference to any peculiar gifts, had a numerous congregation. Things were altered after Calvin's death; and that spirit, as yet not known, which then began to prevail, was so distressing to the preachers, that they complained to the council, that, while the people flocked in crowds to the talented and celebrated orator Beza, the other ministers were left forsaken. Even Beza himself, as a member of the consistory, affording a rare instance of right-mindedness, prayed the council to put an end to this negligence and irregularity.

The lectures on the Book of Job may be spoken of in connection with his most excellent pulpit productions. Beza appended a preface to the Latin translation of this work, made by some unknown author. In this preface he bestows a noble eulogium on Calvin as an expositor, and he expresses his regret that he could not himself revise the sermons; he says, that they were



attended with such a blessing in the whole of France, that they were daily read, especially where there was a want of preachers, both in churches and families. But Calvin, as is often the case with authors, knew the worth of his own production so little, that, according to Beza's statement, repeated in the preface to the French edition, it was only obtained from him by force.

The Book of Job must have been full of interest to a man of Calvin's habit of thought. A solemn and profound line of argument, extending even to particulars, characterizes this composition, and closely connects it with the doctrine of our author, because it leads to the conviction that, if God exposes us to suffering, He is righteous in doing so ; that everything proceeds from Him alone, because He alone is almighty, and omnipotence is ever connected with righteousness. This may account for the peculiar delight which Calvin experienced in the interpretation of this portion of Scripture.

In the first sermon, which may serve as an introduction to the Book of Job, Calvin says, " This history shows how, being as we are in the hand of God, we ought to submit ourselves entirely to his will ; what reason we have continually to glorify Him, even when his hand is heavy upon us, and we understand not the cause of the infliction. Always let us know that He is righteous and holy, and that to Him alone belongs the victory. Let us learn that his power over his creature is unlimited, and being assured that his severity toward us, though often inexplicable, is righteous, let us humbly wait till He be pleased to reveal why He has chastened us. And further ; let us obey the precept of the Apostle James, and meditate upon the patience of the man who is here placed before our eyes : his example will show us, that a frail being like ourselves may persevere in his obedience, and resist even to the end, and that amid sufferings and trials, the temptations of Satan. Then let us consider the happy consequence of this patience of Job, and how he was not deceived in his hope, but found grace just according to the measure of his humility. There is also this further inference to be drawn from the history ; namely, that although our sufferings are imposed on us by God, it is Satan who, as St. Paul says, so works against us that we have to struggle with the powers of darkness. When the devil moreover kindles a fire, he can always find bellows with which to blow it, that is, men to spur us on and to increase the evil. Thus Job, besides the pain which he had to endure, was plagued by his friends, his

wife, and especially by those who tempted him spiritually. I call it a spiritual temptation, when the devil assails us through our sufferings, when God is opposed to us, and we dare not seek his help, or hope for his grace. These spiritual struggles are heavier to bear than other sufferings and trials."

"We should further remark, how Job, in the whole controversy with his friends, defended a good cause, and the latter a bad one, but so that Job set forth his good cause badly, and his friends their evil one well. If we succeed in making this clear, we shall have a key to the whole book. Job is right when he says, that God does not always punish men according to the measure of their sins, but has his secret counsels, of which He gives us no account. Job knew and felt that he was not, as men wished him to believe, cast away by God; but he failed through want of moderation, and employed the rash expressions of a man in despair. He even went so far as to bring upon himself the charge of resisting God. Hence he conducted his good cause in an evil way. His friends, on the contrary, who supported a false principle, namely, that God punishes only according to the sins committed, have fair and pious sentiments in their mouths, speaking as if whatever they said was suggested to them by the Holy Ghost, and pronouncing judgment on the principles of religion, on the providence of God, on his righteousness, and the sins of men. All this looks fair, but their end is bad; their object being to reduce Job to despair, and altogether destroy him."

Calvin next gives a summary of the whole history, speaks of the honor in which the name of Job was held in the most ancient times among the Israelites, and remarks that the prophet Ezekiel\* mentions him with Noah and Daniel. He also observes, that though he was descended from Esau, who had forsaken the covenant of the fathers and was rejected by God, he was pious and righteous before the Lord, and belonged to the number of those whom God had elected to preserve the pure worship of himself, at a time when his church had not as yet a visible existence.

Thus he says of the righteousness of Job:—"It is stated that he was a perfect man; now this word in Scripture is used to represent a character in which there is no fiction or hypocrisy; when the man is the same without as he is within, having no subterfuge in reserve to excuse his turning from God, but em-

\* Ezek. xiv. 14.

ploying all his thoughts and affections about Him, and seeking nothing but the entire devotion of himself, of his heart and soul to his service. We cannot indeed be perfect, for even those who are on the right path will sometimes trail the foot or the wing. But this at least we must do, renounce all hypocrisy and falsehood. True holiness begins from within; for had we the fairest reputation among men, so that every one praised us, and this righteousness or perfection before God was wanting, it would be as nothing. It is necessary above all things that the fountain be pure; the streams which flow from it will then be pure also. Let us therefore always remember this; God will be honored in spirit and in truth: He looks to the sincerity of the heart."

The author next shows particularly how Job preserved his purity in the midst of a corrupt people. "He could not," it is said, "pursue his righteous course without great struggles, or without provoking the assaults of Satan, desiring to betray him and involve him in the depravity of the world: but he avoided the wickedness to which he was tempted. What now should we do? Although we live in the church of God, yet shall we never find ourselves encompassed by such purity and perfection, as not to be sometimes mixed up with men who are firebrands, a deadly pest, and capable of anything: we should therefore be always on our guard. How so? We should avoid the wicked, that is, follow the example of Job, and contend against such attacks, and guard ourselves against the corruption with which we are assailed, in the midst of the vices and iniquity of the world. We should not say, as so many do, 'One must howl with the wolves;' but we must so turn from the evil, that the temptations of Satan may have no power over us, and wait quietly till God cleanse our filth and our sores, according as He has promised to do, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and so free us from the pollutions of this world, that He may present us pure among the angels in eternal blessedness."

In the second sermon he shows, how Job afforded an image of virtue even by his great riches, which so easily prove a snare to men; how he served God in the simplicity of his heart, and came before him with sacrifices and prayers, after the feastings of his children: he also takes occasion from this incident to assail such feastings. "Job knew well," he says, "what experience teaches, that in all entertainments where God is not honored, as He ought to be, disorders will be allowed. First,

there is the superfluity of meats; people eat and drink more than usual, and this is the case even with those who avoid any gross excess: and then what numberless foolish things are said or done! Where people ought to eat as if they were in the presence of God, and to rejoice as if his angels were their fellow-guests, vanities are introduced which so transport them, that it seems as if they could not be merry without committing excesses. I say this even of good men. But if it be thus even where the guests are generally moderate and decorous, what is not likely to take place among those who drive God from their society and their table? For if the question were put, how ought the banquet to be commenced? and it were answered, 'by invoking the name of God,'—O, this would be thought a melancholy affair. The name of God therefore must be buried, for to think of Him would be to change the gaiety of the feast into mourning. License must be allowed for everything: treason and malice must have free scope; no news will be worth hearing by which some neighbor is not slandered, or by which some machination is not introduced against this one or that. This is the consequence of banquets. Inclined then as men are to vice, it is impossible to avoid sin where free scope is given for its commission. Can we look therefore for anything but an infernal gulf, where they almost purposely assemble to plot together in the spirit of malice and treason? We should not indeed encourage unnecessary scruples, but we should be vigilant and guarded to avoid surprise. Let us therefore, when we sit at table, pray God to preserve us in temperance by his grace, so that the food which we take may be not for luxury, but for nourishment, and to strengthen us in the service of God. Let us pray that He may grant us grace to look beyond the things of this transitory life to those of eternity, to which he invites us by his Word; seeing that it is not that we may live for a day, or ten days, or fifty years, that He has given us existence, but that we may attain to eternal glory."

As we rarely escape falling into sin, Calvin says further:—"Job seeks a remedy, and it is this: God will strengthen us in our infirmities. If my children have not in anywise done what is right, God will still have mercy on them and me. Let us implore his pardon. Job did not, however, forbid his children to celebrate their feasts: and why not? because the thing in itself was good." He then speaks of the edifying manner in which Job instructed his children. He admonished them to



sanctify themselves after their feasting; and they obeyed his command, although they had their own separate habitations. With how much pain did Calvin reprove the want of filial obedience in the young people of later times! He says: "Now, as soon as children have reached the age of ten years, they begin to conceit themselves men: they require the rod for fifteen years after they have assumed the manly garb."\*

The feeling of repentance is strikingly visible as a characteristic of Calvin's piety, and no less so of his care for souls. He was ever striving to keep alive the consciousness of sin, and of the misery of mankind. His intense conviction of the truth of eternal election, and his constant sense of the nearness of God, under whose eyes, as he expresses himself, he carried on the conflict in which he was engaged, are perpetually apparent. He does not indeed utter his pious sentiments with the love and tenderness which mark the colloquies and meditations of the holy Augustine, but more profoundly and concisely. Let those who would rightly understand this, read the short prayers with which he concludes his several expositions of the minor prophets. These prayers express, but with a richness of phraseology always new, the same great truths respecting the misery of mankind and eternal salvation, and would form together an excellent and instructive book for family devotion.

They show his perpetual attention to the great work of salvation. To deliver souls was his main business; the method was an inferior consideration. Had he felt otherwise he would have been no reformer. Opinions have so changed in our times, that we exalt the interests of science above all others, and regard the struggle for salvation as a secondary matter. His great doctrine of predestination must have given him, as a pastor, much to do. The souls of his hearers were continually filled with anxiety through this principle of his system: he was therefore the more desirous to provide for their instruction, and remarks, that "they who sought to fathom this mystery without the aid of God's Word would fall into a deep abyss." He adds

\* "Et qu'il semble que ce soit merveilles; car ce ne sont que petites ordures, et de souffrir nulle correction, nulle doctrine, il n'en est nouvelle. Il leur semble qu'on leur feroit tort et injure." Referring then to the fine example of Job's children, he continues:—"Quand donc nous voyons cela, c'est bien pour condamner tous ces petits rustres, qui font les braves, et levent les cornes; ils ne savent que c'est de discipline en façon que ce soit, ce ne sont que merdailles, et néanmoins ils veulent contrefaire les hommes; et ceux (les fils de Job) qui estoient agez, et advisez pour conduire un mesnage, encore voyons nous qu'ils estoient retenus sous la conduite et l'obéissance de Job."

some useful practical warnings against inquiring too far into mysteries.

Examples of his zeal in the care of souls are furnished in the first part of this work.\* We may instance the devotion with which both he and his wife watched by the death-bed of a fellow-townsmen, to whom he imparted the knowledge of saving truth. I refer however more particularly to passages in which he treats of the duties of a preacher of the Gospel, and shows his love for souls. "That anxiety burnt and tormented us whenever we had to administer the sacrament." "For every single soul must the preacher give account." And often do we meet with this strong expression in his works:—"The blood of souls will be demanded at the hands of the pastor."

He considered certain regulations necessary for ministers, it being contrary to his system to leave anything to the caprice of individuals:—1. The congregational preaching introduced by him must have been in the highest degree conducive to the religious instruction of the people. It consisted of a discourse intended for the edification of the grown-up portion of the congregation, which assembled on a week-day (Friday); and after the sermon any one who pleased was at liberty to come forth, to make his observations, and discuss them with the preacher. This gave rise to a higher species of catechizing, through the utter absence of which in our churches many of the people live in the grossest error, without its being suspected by their clergyman. Calvin seems to have found it useful to let the people enter into conversation with the minister, to awaken their interest in the subject of his discourse. From the same principle, the public catechizing of the children was established: in this, as is still the custom, the children answered the questions of the minister aloud in the presence of the congregation. The preaching of which we have spoken also afforded Calvin the opportunity of admonishing the people. Thus it is said that, following the advice of some of the brethren, he warned the community by stating it in the congregation, that two heretics had arrived in Geneva, who taught that he only is a Christian who is perfect, and that the forgiveness of sins is a deliverance effected for us by Jesus Christ, that we may enjoy this perfection. This was the beginning of the strife with Bolsec; for we learn from the same source (Oct. 16), "St. André holds the congregation;

\* Ep. 42.

Farel makes his remarks; Bolsec brings forth his doctrine; Calvin answers him."

This congregational preaching therefore was, in a peculiar sense, subjected to the censure of the people. A new regulation was afterwards introduced, and discourses could only be reviewed in the assembly of the clergy. This rule was observed till the year 1792. Now, in the weekly sermon the holy Scriptures are expounded. Polemical freedom might indeed be somewhat restricted at first, since it was so dangerous to do aught against unity of doctrine; but in those times the tendency of the popular mind was all on the side of protestantism, and much was ventured. It appears plain, how useful such public disputations between disbelievers and the clergy might be made in these days, in which there is far too much unprofitable preaching, the infidel thinking within himself the "preacher has spoken well enough, but no one dare contradict him. He wields his sword bravely about in the air, without ever allowing his adversary to come near him."

2. Another excellent practice which Calvin established at the beginning, was the visitation of the sick: to this he consecrated a distinct article in the liturgy, *De la Visitation des Malades*, in which he says, "It is the duty of the minister not only to preach the truth, but as far as possible to warn, encourage and comfort every one. This spiritual instruction is then most needful to a man when the hand of the Lord is upon him, and he is visited with pain and sickness or other distresses, and especially in the hour of death. He then feels himself more than in any other moment disturbed by his conscience, as well on account of the judgment of God, before whom he is about to appear, as through the assaults of the devil, who then employs all his strength to overpower the poor creature, and to bow him down with shame and misery. It is the duty therefore of ministers to visit the faithful, to comfort them with God's Word, and to show them how all which they suffer comes from his hand and his good providence, and that He allows nothing to happen to his own but what may conduce to their benefit and salvation. In all these cases the minister should choose the most careful expressions. If he sees that the sufferers are at the point of death, he must act towards them according to the state of their souls: should they be oppressed with terror at the near approach of death, he must show them that death has nothing really terrible in it for Christians, see-

ing that they have Christ for their guide and protector, and that he will conduct them to that eternal life into which he himself has already entered. In this manner should the preacher subdue that terror which dread of the judgment of God may have inspired. But should they not be sufficiently alarmed by a sense of sin, he must then explain to them what the judgment of God is, and how they can only stand before it through his mercy, and by embracing Christ as their salvation. If again they are disturbed in conscience, and bowed down with the feeling of their defects, then he must represent Christ to them in clear and lively colors, and make them understand how all poor sinners, only mistrusting themselves, may find in him refuge and consolation. A good and faithful minister will consider by what means he can best comfort the sufferers, following, that is, the Word of the Lord, and observing the spirit by which they are animated. And if he knows anything by which he can administer bodily relief to them, he will not neglect to do it, but will afford in all ways an example of true charity."

Calvin also directed, as we have before seen, that no one should lie ill three days without sending for a minister.

3. With regard to the custom of administering the Lord's Supper to the sick, which the reformed church, from too great a dread of giving room to superstition, has rejected, Calvin has frequently spoken in favor of the practice. In the same manner, he was by no means opposed to the delivery of an address at funerals,—a custom also which his church for three hundred years did not allow. Of the sacrament, in relation to the sick, he says,\* "Many and powerful reasons induce me not to refuse the Lord's Supper to the sick. In the meanwhile I see how easily many abuses may arise, which it will be our duty to oppose with zeal and forethought. If, for example, a communion be allowed, at which several persons are not present, there will be a departure from Christ's institution. A little meeting of relations and neighbors should be called, that the sacrament may be administered according to our Lord's command. The mystery should also be clearly explained, and everything be done as in the church." Calvin speaks of carrying the sacrament about from place to place, in an irregular way, as very dangerous. It is difficult, when this is done, to prevent some from desiring the sacrament from superstition, and others from ambition and a foolish vanity. "Judgment and experience there-

\* Epis. 361. August, 1561.



fore are required to determine the nature of the case, that it may be given only in those instances in which life is in danger. To carry the bread out of the church with pomp and ceremony, as something holy, is in nowise to be endured."

In another letter\* he says,—“We have no right to deny this benefit to the sick, needing it as they do in their last conflict. It were especially hard to refuse them this testimony to their being Christians, and at a time when they most require some sign of their communion with the church. I will not however create disquiet on this account: I yield, because it would not be good to introduce strife.” He continues to observe, that the first Christians had no churches in which to partake of the sacrament; that they must therefore have celebrated it in houses; and he thence justifies a practice which his fellow-believers rejected: but he insists firmly on this, that no one can communicate alone.

With regard to the greater or less frequency of celebrating the communion, in which the Lutheran differs from the Calvinistic church, he speaks as follows:†—“We should have much wished to partake of the Lord’s Supper every month, but not so as to let the frequent repetition of the enjoyment degenerate into negligence; for when the larger part of the congregation withdraw themselves from the communion, the church is in one sense dissolved. We should have been glad to invite the church to partake of the Lord’s Supper every month, instead of only four times in the year, as is our custom. When I first came here it was celebrated only three times a year, and so that between Whitsuntide and Christmas seven months were passed without its being enjoyed. I wished to introduce the monthly celebration of it; but when I found so few who allowed themselves to be convinced, it seemed better to spare the weakness of the people’s faith than to strive obstinately against it. I took care however that it should be remarked in the public acts, that our custom was defective, so that those who came after might have more freedom and ease in correcting it.” The reformed church has persevered in celebrating the communion four times a year. This affords a fresh proof of the fact, that Calvin could not always effect that which he considered best, and earnestly wished to accomplish.

4. As soon as he had his hands somewhat freer, and that the party most strongly opposed to him was overthrown, he took

\* Epis. 363.

† Epis. 361.

care to execute his early plan for the general oversight of families and home-preaching, which is altogether wanting among us. Pastoral visits were prescribed for the improvement of faith and morals; nor were ministers alone employed in these visits. Members of the council, the syndics, the highest magistrates took part in the labor, and anxiously employed themselves about the salvation of men-servants and maid-servants. The first and the last joined hands in this work.

Bucer thus wrote to Calvin on the subject :\*—"I must greatly praise you for visiting the brethren, for you know with what pain I have observed that this duty of piety and love, on the part of the clergy—to visit, to warn and comfort the people—is greatly neglected, and by the greater number almost wholly forgotten. May God be with you in this, so that what you have piously established may prove useful to the brethren !"

5. In respect to attendance at church, he acted with such determination, that he inflicted a regular penalty of some sols on those who were guilty of negligence. He admonished the people with great earnestness on this duty, as we see from the following letter :†—

"Invaluable is the fruit of that holy institution, by means of which we assemble together in one place, to be instructed in common in the divine doctrine of Christ, to call upon the Lord with one heart and one mouth, to strengthen ourselves in the faith by the use of the sacraments, and thus to show ourselves before God and the angels as the soldiers of Christ. This is indispensably necessary, and Satan could not expose you to a more dangerous temptation than that of inducing you, under any pretence whatever, to treat so great a benefit with contempt. Let no one wish to be wiser than God in this matter, or think to himself that there are other means of promoting his advancement in the way of salvation. I allow indeed that the elect were delivered even in the midst of the distractions caused by antichrist, but this was a wonderful instance of the power of divine grace, and God's anger is openly revealed against those whose hearts are not made partakers of his Word."

Much has been said respecting the violence which he employed in compelling men to perform the services of religion. Calvin may possibly have derived this compulsory mode of acting, in matters of pastoral duty, from his great master, Augustine, who, unlike Calvin, was somewhat inconsistent with himself

\* Epis. 72, 1547.

† Epis. 303.

in his adoption of compulsory principles, which he partly put in force and partly rejected, in his treatment of opponents. Calvin, impressed with the idea that Christians need a spiritual education, and that ministers are answerable for souls, went further in his zeal for pastoral superintendence than his great exemplar.

6. To render preaching more awakening for the people, Calvin in the second year of his office introduced a change of preachers,—certainly a very useful measure, adopted to a great extent by the catholics, who send missionaries into the various parishes to arouse the attention of the people by a different kind of preaching to that of their ordinary ministers. This practice, we are sorry to say, is altogether neglected in our evangelical churches. The methodists of England only have restored the custom of missionary preaching.

All these regulations for the guidance of ministers were reviewed by the consistory. The members of this evangelical, moral tribunal afforded regular reports of that which was brought before them. Every unbecoming word, even heard in the street, was made known to the consistory. Judgment was pronounced without respect to persons: an officer brought the offenders before the tribunal. Thus both men and women of the highest class, the daughters of the first families, were obliged to appear, and questions were put to them on the tenderest points of conscience. We may easily imagine with what rage and indignation these proceedings would be regarded by the old families, who had been accustomed to an unrestrained mode of living, and who delighted above all things in music and dancing, in theatrical and other public amusements. Under the catholic bishops they had enjoyed themselves without restraint, and had struggled successfully for their political liberty. But now they were obliged to submit themselves to the power of the stern reformer, who demanded a lofty earnestness, simplicity, chasteness, and purity, both in word and action. The consistory admonished offenders. Very frequently they would not submit themselves, but appealed to the council, which in its turn desired them to seek reconciliation with the church, and to pray the consistory to pardon the offences which they had committed. In obedience to this injunction, they were obliged to kneel before the tribunal, to listen to its severe rebukes, and in bad cases to remain separated from communion, which was considered the most humiliating of disgraces.

Calvin seems to have permitted the accused to come, in the first instance, privately to his own house: this is gathered from an unpublished letter, dated February 20, 1555. He says,—“We might have summoned him immediately before the consistory, but to spare his friends we spoke with him apart.” We also see that Calvin, notwithstanding his vehemence, always conducted himself with great dignity in the consistory, and that this bearing was generally assumed by his brethren in office, who were always addressed as *Seigneurs Ministres*. There were instances in which the assembled ministers arose and separated, because the accused conducted themselves with disrespect. But it also appears that Calvin sometimes used very strong language towards those before him, calling them hypocrites, and that they returned the abuse, a conduct which he did not leave unpunished. On such occasions he would rise indignantly from his seat, command attention, and require the consistory to give the matter over to the council, that the offence might be punished as it deserved.\* As soon as the consistory entertained a suspicion against any one, it referred to the council, who ordered the accused to prison.†

Calvin felt that he was especially elected to uphold purity of doctrine, and thus he permitted himself to mingle a foreign principle with the obligations of a pastor. It ought however to be distinctly observed, that this, the end being obtained, was subsequently modified, and never prevailed in the same degree in other churches. Many facts indeed tend to show that, at the first, any one who opposed the faith, or offended believers, or even ventured to take accused persons under his protection, exposed himself to great annoyances, complaints and processes. But who will enter into judgment with the man who, believing himself appointed to execute the burdensome duty of restoring order to the church, and to proclaim to a self-righteous world the mighty judgments of God by predestination,—who will venture to condemn a poor, weak man, if, under such circumstances, he suffered his zeal to burn too fiercely, or if he identified himself too entirely with his doctrine? Christianity and antichristianity had become a matter of party, and thence arose a passion which degenerated at last into disbelief.

\* Galiffe Not. Gen.

† Jan. 18, 1544. “Sur la rélation du consistoire contre P. Roseti, qui a démenti le Sr. Michel Morel, et dit qu’il étoit aussi homme de bien que lui; et est soupçonné de paillardise: ord. qu’il soit constitué prisonnier.”



Among the numerous processes instituted at this period, we shall mention only that against the preacher Philip de Ecclesia, who said that there were errors in the Geneva catechism,—among other things, in the doctrine of predestination. It was also laid to his charge that he practised usury, and lent money at the rate of from 80 to 100 per cent. Nothing however could be proved against him, except that he was at enmity with his relations. From some other allusions to legal proceedings, we see that heretical speeches against religion might even place the offender's life in danger. Thus a woman, Copa of Ferrara, was sentenced in 1559 to ask mercy of God and of justice, and to be banished, with the order that she should depart within twenty-four hours, under pain of losing her head. This sentence was pronounced upon her because she had uttered certain heretical expressions against Calvin, and the directions of the consistory. Smaller offences brought smaller punishments. Some men who had laughed while Calvin was preaching were put in prison for three days, and condemned to ask pardon before the consistory. Numberless processes of this kind took place. In the two years 1558 and 1559 alone there were 414 such trials.

This mode of proceeding may now be thought altogether peculiar and faulty: but any rule may bear good fruit when the spirit is good; and thus it was here. Calvin sincerely desired to accomplish what was right, and certainly some excellent results attended the institution which he established. Even in his own time, when Knox was in Geneva, the latter speaks with admiration of the good order of the church; for this great man, united with his severity a Christian heroism, a moderation and gentleness in his pastoral duties, which altogether reconcile us to him, and overpower the ruder tones of his character. His extended circle of activity affords numberless proofs of this fact, to be found illustrated in those most interesting documents which have hitherto been left buried in forgetfulness, and a few of which only we can here bring to light.

Our attention may be properly first directed to Calvin's admirable exhortation to the reading of the holy Scriptures. This is found in the collection of his letters, and he shows,—1. What Scripture is; and 2. in what manner it must be read, in order to produce fruit. His explanation of the right mode of praying to God in the name of Jesus is also very edifying and instructive.\* ✓

\* Ep. 346. Ed. Amst. p. 179.

“When we call upon God the Father, by name, to hear us, for the sake of his Son, it is to be thus understood. Christ has opened for us the way to his Father by his death, so that we may approach Him with confidence, and in such a way that Jesus himself also prays for us in virtue of his sacrifice, makes our prayers heard, and secures their fulfilment. We must not however think of Christ as if he lay at his Father’s feet, as it might be done among men. All that we have to bear in mind is, that He is our mediator, that He appeals to the Father for us, presents our prayers and supplications, and obtains for us a hearing and grace,—hearing, I say, in order that we may call upon the Father in his name, and be heard by Him,—grace, that we may in this manner obtain for his sake what we have asked of the Father. Thus a pious man, when he prays to God in the name of Christ, must recollect that if he appealed to God without a guide or a mediator, he could never, base as he is, ascend to that high majesty; whereas, having the promise of his Saviour, who offers him his hand, it is not difficult for him to approach his God.

“But should the thought arise in our minds, how can Christ, being God, intercede for us with the Father, since He would then be offering up prayers to himself, which we cannot imagine him to do, we must recollect two things which will remove the difficulty. First, the true God is one only God, but so that in that godhead a distinction of persons, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is always to be understood; there is nothing inconsistent therefore in our directing ourselves in prayer to the person of the Father. Secondly, Christ, who assumed our nature, that He might accomplish our redemption therein, has taken upon himself the office of mediator, which He can only execute by praying for us, according to his human nature.

“When we turn in prayer to Christ, we either pray that He may bring us, as our mediator, to the Father, and this serves as a preparation for our coming to the Father; or we beseech Him to help us by his own might, as He, to whom all power is given, in whom the fulness of the godhead dwells, and who is the eternal God, made manifest to us in the flesh. In both ways we may pray to Christ in truth and holiness.” We select the following from some of his pastoral letters.

Thus, in addressing an irresolute, slothful young man, he says:—“I do not disregard the difficulties which stand in your way, but nothing is too hard for him who loves. You have

some one who holds out his hand from heaven to you. The Lord will certainly find out a way. You have only allowed yourself too long to be driven to and fro by doubts and surmises. In \*so certain a matter one ought to determine quickly what it is proper to do, and to execute at once and boldly the resolution which has been taken. Human consideration is worth nothing; that of our heavenly Teacher must be all to us."

2. Blaarer had asked him in what manner he could comfort a person who was now in great uneasiness, having frequently fallen back into the commission of old offences. Calvin answered:—"You ask me for advice, as if I were better acquainted with these things than you, who greatly excel me in learning, experience and penetration. Where examples fail, we must hold fast by doctrine. All the prophets, especially Jeremiah, show that we may obtain God's forgiveness by repentance. Sacrifices were appointed for those who had often fallen. The seventy-eighth psalm teaches us that God will pardon even the hypocrite and the wicked. The Gospel proclaims forgiveness for the sins of a whole life. Paul, in the second epistle to the Corinthians, declares it.† So also, Christ is not our mediator for a day only, but forever.‡ Daniel,§ in his solemn prayer, confesses that sin was heaped upon sin. In the Creed it is said, 'I believe in the forgiveness of sins,' that we may never despair."

3. To the duchess of Ferrara, exhorting her to remain faithful to the truth, he writes,||—"Although I am well aware that I have cause to thank God that He continues to guide and uphold you in his fear, and in obedience to his will, yet I hope that you will see how necessary it is to go forward, and to increase in steadfastness, and that you will thank me if, both from regard for you, and care for you and for your soul, as well as from zeal for the glory of God's name, I strive to render you as much help as possible. I know that you are willingly taught and admonished, and receive with a child-like teachableness what you regard as coming from God. Well then, gracious lady, if it was said to you, in former times, that in order to become righteous you must forget all worldly considerations, it is now the season for you to act. We need not number all the difficulties which may rise in your way and deter you from glorifying God; you are made aware of them too soon: but by so much the more must the hope that He who has begun a

\* Epis. 357.

† 1 John ii. 1.

§ Dan. ix. 6.

† 2 Corin. xii. 19, 20; v. 18.

|| MSS. Gen. 1561.

good work in you will finish it, strengthen you for the victory. Do but arm yourself with his promises, and seek for refuge in the strength of his spirit, which is sufficient to secure your triumph in every struggle. In the mean time I beseech you, gracious lady, to afford such an example in the high station in which God has placed you, as you know He requires from you, and that the good may thereby be encouraged and the wicked shamed. Yea, though the wicked burst, you must continue to despise them, and give glory to God by your obedience. In the second place, I admonish you, gracious lady, to go on as you have begun, to protect the poor members of Jesus Christ, and to provide for the tranquillity of the church. When you know, moreover, that this is an acceptable service to God, an offering well-pleasing in his sight, so must you find great encouragement in that word of the holy Scripture which says, that they who comfort the suffering members of Christ, are helpers of God's mercy, which is so honorable a title, that we should lose no time in endeavoring to obtain it. Thus, as the wanderer hastens on his path, when the night begins to fall around him, so should increasing years remind you, gracious lady, to strive the more diligently to leave a good witness upon earth, or rather to obtain it before God and the angels, having proved that the church of Jesus Christ was dearer to you than any earthly advantage. If you resolve upon this, as it becomes you to do, then do I hope, gracious lady, that God will so profitably employ your nobleness of heart and constancy, that all believers may with one mouth and one heart bless your return, and acknowledge that God has indeed had mercy on them through you, and stretched out his hand to them, having brought you back to France in your old age. But since this is a work which passes all human ability, so do I beseech you, gracious lady, daily to encourage and excite yourself thereto, remembering the holy admonitions which we find written in the Word of God."

4. Another letter was addressed to one who was lingering in a prison in France, for the sake of God's Word:—"The peace of God and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be always with you, through the fellowship of the Holy Ghost. My Brother! Insofar as the things for which you suffer are the common concern of all the children of God, we are partakers of your affliction. But we have no other means of fulfilling our duty to you, except by expressing our sympathy and our anxious care for you in our prayers to God; and I beseech you to believe that



we do not fail herein. And it is chiefly on this account that I write to you, that you may know that we think of you as of a good soldier who is fighting for the Word of God, for the honor of our only Redeemer, and for the doctrine of salvation. It is true we should also comfort you, for assuredly do you need comfort; but the greatness of the distance, and the difficulty of getting our letters to you, lay bands upon us: nor do I doubt but that the good God will richly make up for the assistance which fails you on the part of men, both by the holy admonitions of his Word, and the working of his spirit in your heart. And were we in possession of all means, and used them with all possible diligence, yet would they only be so far fruitful as He gave them increase, who, without our labor, can accomplish all things. Wherefore the best counsel I can give you is, to make the Word of God, when within your reach, your constant resource; or, when this blessing is denied you, to keep constantly in your memory that which He has formerly allowed you to learn therefrom; praying in the mean time that He may enable you to relish the kernel thereof to your nourishment and increase in strength. Remember also, in your afflictions, that God can soften them. And will He forsake those who are suffering for the testimony of the truth, when He promises to aid even transgressors who, being punished for their misdeeds, call upon Him in their trouble? That you may not think it strange that you suffer so much, recollect how much more precious the name of God and the kingdom of Christ are, than our life, or all that the world can give. It is indeed an unspeakable comfort for us to think that God, who could most justly punish us for our sins, favors us so highly, that He suffers us to endure persecutions as witnesses and defenders of his Word, and thus to bear the ensigns of his Son, which, however despised in the sight of men, are more glorious before God and the angels than all the crowns and sceptres of earthly princes. I know well indeed that you are not brass and iron, and that the flesh cannot oppose itself with enduring might against the sufferings which threaten you. But as you have hitherto so signally experienced the power of God's goodness and support, so continue to hope that He will not deny you them in the future. Be assured, that as long as He continues your afflictions, He will bestow upon you the grace to endure them. Do but follow the guidance of God's Word, and patiently await what He will bring to pass. As we ought always to be ready to glorify Him by our death, so should

we be willing to live and to suffer as long as it pleases Him ; and He who knows our weakness is faithful, and will appoint such an end to the trial that we may be able to bear it. Doubt not then but that your wife, who is as your spiritual fellow-prisoner, is with you in heart and shares your sufferings. But no slight alleviation will it be to her, if she learn that you show that steadfastness in the Lord which is proper to those who have given themselves wholly to Him. Yea, it awakens joy in all the members of Jesus Christ, when they see that his name is honored through the invincible constancy of his martyrs, notwithstanding all the opposition of the ungodly. And not only have the faithful upon earth cause for rejoicing, but also the angels in heaven. The former however have so much the greater reason, inasmuch as they are strengthened thereby ; while the instability and weakness of the poor unhappy creatures who deny the known truth are often the cause of shipwreck to the faith of weak brethren. I write indeed as one far removed from the danger, but yet not absolutely so ; and who knows how long I may be safe ? According to appearance our turn may also soon come. Let us therefore mutually learn to direct our eyes to heaven ; let us not be weary till we have finished our course ; let each impress upon his heart that he must follow Jesus, whenever He may call him, without considering what others do ; and that while so many prove themselves faithless and void of honor, it is no longer fit for us to look to men. Finally, I pray our good God to strengthen your hands for the conflict, that you may be victorious in every battle ; to guide you by his Holy Spirit, and to take you under his protection, and lastly so to convince you of his care for you, that you may attain to perfect rest. Commending myself to your benevolence, I am your faithful brother and servant, Carl Despeville."\*

5. The following is a letter to a community, persecuted on account of the Gospel : †—"Dear brothers and sirs, I have heard that you are more than ordinarily persecuted in your city by the enemies of the faith. As soon as Satan is aware that the kingdom of God advances, and that the number of the faithful is increased, he immediately redoubles his efforts to destroy them. You will not however lose your courage, though God gives the wicked the reins for a little while to trouble you ; for our faith

\* The reader will remember that caution induced Calvin to sign his letters with this assumed name.

† MSS. Gen. Oct. 8, 1555.

must be proved, and if we be persecuted for the sake of saving doctrine, we must show by our constancy how dear and precious it is to us, whatever may be done to draw us from it. If you feel yourselves too weak, turn to Him who has the fulness of strength in his hand. But if it be necessary to arm yourselves against the fierce assaults of the enemies of God, their cunning and deceit are even still more to be feared. Many indeed have been cast down at beholding their lives and their goods threatened, but it is worse for them to be turned from God by hidden and deceitful means. As for example, when your mitred bishop promises three months' indulgence to those who forsake Jesus, and thereby deny the Gospel, snares are laid to entrap poor souls in everlasting ruin. Take heed therefore to yourselves, lest you should be induced to prove unfaithful to Him who purchased you at so dear a price. Better were it to see the pile kindled to consume the body, than to let the soul perish forever, filled with deadly poison. If therefore the enemies of your salvation are preparing to employ these means to deceive you, consider this, that God warns you to draw back, as if the trumpet were now sounding in your ears. Whatever happens, prove, in the hour of danger, that you are good and faithful soldiers of Jesus Christ, and that you despise Satan and all his inventions; nor suffer this world to restrain you, or to interfere with your incorruptible inheritance in heaven. Be assured that it is God's will to make your faith manifest by these trials, and that He will hide you under his wing, that you may continue steadfast, and despise the safety which the messengers of Satan offer you. I now commend myself, beloved brethren, to you, and pray God to protect and strengthen you, that you may be able to resist the temptations which await you, and may never forsake the right way. I have written but a short letter, because I doubt not but that our dear brother, who is with you, admonishes you according to the grace which is given him by God."

6. The following is a letter of encouragement to a lady in a weak and hesitating state of mind. Her husband was not in the faith:—"Although you have not manifested so much firmness and resolution as we expected, yet you must not, beloved sister in Jesus Christ, lose courage, if you do but feel a true and hearty repentance for your fall. You cannot indeed urge anything to excuse so great a sin; but you must be watchful that Satan do not tempt you to despair, and so estrange you wholly

from God. You have not answered as you should before your judges. As you have fallen, because you did not remain true to the Lord, this apostasy ought to awaken great sorrow in your heart, and you must re-establish yourself by trust in Him, who gives victory in every temptation. Suffer death a hundred times rather than sin against God, or separate yourself from him to obey your husband. Provoke not his wrath for such a reconciliation, or for the sake of peace with him upon whom the divine curse rests; lest for an earthly union which can last but for a short time, you break the holy and eternal bands which unite us to Christ. If you tempt God, Satan will load you with chains, which you will never be able to shake off. Care for your salvation compels me to admonish you. The dangers to which you have been exposed must render you cautious, and show you what you are, unless, despising God's grace, you would plunge yourself in eternal ruin."

7. We quote the following from a letter to a lady, whose faith was tried by domestic circumstances :—"Although I am not so devoid of pity as not to feel deeply moved at seeing you in still closer confinement, yet I cannot cease to exhort you to arm yourself so much the more with constancy, as the trial becomes more terrible; since when Satan and the enemies of the faith press us most without, then is the time for us to use the grace of God. St. Paul glories that, though he was in prison and in chains the doctrine which he preached was not bound, but free and operative. And indeed as the truth of God, far exalted above the world, reaches even up to heaven, it cannot be subjected to the pleasure and tyranny of men. However then the devil may labor to oppress us with troubles, let our hearts expand so much the more through faith, that we may the better repel his attacks. Our Lord has lately afforded us many examples, and still gives us them daily in various places. They ought to shame us; for if we faint at the stroke of the rod, while others tremble not at death, how shall we be able to excuse our slothfulness? You have thought it impossible to sustain such severe struggles in your house; but you know that the Son of God has given us warnings, in order that nothing of this kind, we being thus prepared, may shake our resolution. And reflect still further, that this is not the end, but that God is now only gently trying you, He himself bearing your weakness, and being ready so to do till you have become sufficiently strong to endure



his inflictions. But, whatever may happen, allow not yourself to be depressed either through negligence or despair. Many are conquered because, while flattering themselves, they suffer their zeal to grow cold; others, on the contrary, are so terrified not to find in themselves the strength which they hoped to possess, that they sink and give up all for lost. What should we do then? Let us animate ourselves by the consideration of God's promises, which will serve us as a guide and raise our thoughts to heaven, that we may learn to despise this vain and transitory life; and let us again meditate on his threatenings, that they may inspire us with dread of his judgments. If you feel not your heart moved as it ought to be, seek help from him, without whom we can do nothing; strive to overcome your coldness and weakness, till you discover traces of improvement.

“Much foresight is necessary in this labor. On the one side, you ought unceasingly to sigh, and to cherish such sorrow of heart for your condition, and such anguish for your wretchedness, as to leave you no rest; and, on the other, you should not doubt but that God, however little appearance there may now be of it, will give you strength in due time. It must not discourage you to behold the poor church of God so suffering, and the pride of its enemies increasing with their cruelty. Rather wonder that this is so new to you; for the thought should never have been absent from your heart, that we ought to become more and more like the image of the Son of God, and to bear patiently the reproach of his cross till the day of our triumph come. Neglect not this, but let it serve for your encouragement in the fulfilment of your course, for you will have still further trials to endure. If I hear that you are deprived of the little freedom left you, but do not cease to preserve a right disposition, nor prove unfaithful to Him, who so well deserves that his honor should be worth more to us than all besides, then will my joy be more complete. But even now do I rejoice in the good confidence which I have in you. Do not therefore distress me by deceiving this hope, still looking as you should ever do to our good God, and our Lord Jesus, who has shown how dear we are to Him, by offering up himself for our redemption. So bear yourself therefore as to shame Satan and his ministers, who have hoped to trample your faith in the dust. But since such a victory requires a greater strength than you possess, flee to our good Lord Jesus, who is made to us of God for righteousness, that in him we may be able to do all things.

I on my part will pray God that it may please Him so to pour the grace of his spirit into your soul, that you may experience what it is to be strengthened by God and to glorify him. I will beseech him to take you into his holy keeping, and to defend you against the rage of the wolf and the cunning of the fox; wherefore I commend myself in humility to your benevolence and your prayers."

8. Two years before his death—that is in 1562—he wrote a letter to a community accused of great licentiousness, and shows with what authority he could address churches, and with what wisdom he could admonish the erring. The following is the epistle referred to, in a somewhat abridged form:—"Would to God, my very beloved brethren, that I had to write on a more agreeable subject, and that I could afford more satisfaction by my letter. I pray you take it not amiss in me if I trouble you for a little while, seeing that this is the only means whereby we may restore to you that joy in the Lord of which you have been deprived. Ah! how far happier would it be for me to be able to admire your faith, your patience, your love, and only to have to exhort you to go on the same course! Since however your salvation is dear and precious to me, I am constrained to speak of something else, and earnestly to represent that the things which I hear of you do not agree with the Gospel which you have received from the Lord. Thus Paul himself, who had so much love and tenderness of heart, said to the Corinthians, that they had themselves obliged him to treat them with severity; and he afterwards declared that he did not regret having done so, if the sorrow which his epistle had caused did but awaken in them the sighs of a true repentance."

"Your lives," he continues, "create great uneasiness in the minds of the pious, and give occasion to the wicked to reproach the name of God and his holy doctrine. I think it right to hide nothing from you, but to expose to you your whole shame, that you may be able to apply the proper means of recovery. I know that the physicians who employ only gentle remedies, and do not cut through the ulcer, are more agreeable to the patient than those who cure him by cutting deep into the sore. . . . It is reported of you that the love which you once had for the preaching of the divine Word is grown very cold, and this is said to be proved by the horrible vices laid to your charge, by your reckless mode of living, and by the shameful licentiousness which I abhor to think of. Still further, it is said that you

tear each other by wretched falsehoods and slanderings, instead of endeavoring to edify one another. Hatred, dissension and envy rule among you; nor satisfied with strife, you even come to blows. This is the fruit of your contempt for divine doctrine, which ought to have been as a bridle to keep you in the way of purity and holiness. The source of these evils is your diminished love for the Word of God. Those who digest that heavenly food well, hunger continually for it; while those whom it oppresses and disgusts, reject that which they had received. I know that you have not been instructed as there is reason to wish you had. But you seek neither the common nor the especial means of edification, as you ought to do. Whereas, were you a hundred times more skilled in the knowledge of the truth, the treasures of godly wisdom are so great, that you would always find them affording new riches. The most learned doctors will remain their whole life through only poor scholars therein. But even did you not need the knowledge of holy Scripture, is not admonition necessary to restrain your vices? It is in itself a great sin, an instance of unpardonable ingratitude, that you go not forward, but backward. Paul says, 'Let the Word of God dwell richly in you.' Confess therefore your sin in this, that you have not cared to learn the will of God; and remember that you must diligently meditate on the holy Scriptures, to confirm your knowledge of their doctrine. As dislike to ordinary food is a sign of bodily sickness, so is it a still surer sign of spiritual sickness, when the soul has lost its taste for the Word of God. The greatness of this evil is further seen from its wretched consequences. I say not this to increase the pain which your disgrace has caused you, but to show you in what danger you stand. Is it not true that the name of God, for which we cannot cherish too profound a reverence, has been shamefully dishonored among you? Not mere idle oaths, but blasphemies are on the lips of all. How can you believe in God—you who live in such thoughtless security, that that terrible threatening, 'The Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain,' affects you not? But will He, who leaves not those unpunished who swear lightly, suffer his honor to be assailed by such fearful offences without severely punishing the guilty? It is possible that you should so despise the body and blood of Christ, and so mock and insult it? If you do not repent of these sins, you will sooner or later learn, by the sufferings with which the Lord will visit you, what high worth those

things have in his eyes which you tread underfoot. He has already let you feel his displeasure. The excesses in which you indulge are themselves a scourge for your wickedness. Hear what Paul says of those who know God, but honor Him not as God: 'Wherefore also God gave them up to uncleanness.' And here he speaks of a heathen people, who had not, like you, seen the brightness of the heavenly light. But impiously treating as you do the name of the Lord, while walking in the light of the Gospel, I do not wonder that He makes you feel the effects of his righteous judgment. Hence the shameful disorder, the licentiousness, the iniquities practised among you, and which fill even unbelievers with horror. I have indeed seen nothing myself, but the scandal which you occasion is so generally known, that it is open as the day you are only too deserving of punishment. If you but reflected on the word of Paul, who admonishes us to avoid even the appearance of evil, you would surely avoid sin with more care. God allows the evil deeds of the wicked to remain for a time concealed, that they who have rejoiced to commit iniquity under the covering of darkness, may be overwhelmed with confusion when they see themselves discovered.

"In this manner the Lord is wont to lead us to repentance, For the rest, it is not unknown to you what the Scriptures say respecting the sins of uncleanness,—that they call down the curse and vengeance of God upon the offenders; that those who commit them enter not into the kingdom of heaven, for that they thereby pollute the body, which is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and incur a guilt which separates them from the body of Christ. Lastly, this kind of sin brands the soul with a peculiar mark, with a pollution not common to other offences. But your licentiousness has proceeded beyond the ordinary bounds of guilt, and is such as even the heathen would have abhorred. Paul declares to the Corinthians, that if there were any such sinners among them who did not repent, it was a fresh cause of grief to him, and that he was a partaker in their shame. How much more then ought they who have actually defiled themselves with sin, to seek refuge in the most tearful repentance, and the deepest humility! And since you are all, as members of one and the same body, partakers in the common guilt, the confession of this fearful iniquity ought to move you profoundly, to excite you to more diligence than you have hitherto used, and to induce you to promote edification, as well by word as by the example



of your conduct. Some among you are accused of delighting in a certain species of wicked buffoonery, and of being full of rude jests, with which they assail their brethren. But Paul says expressly, that biting words and foolish sayings do not become Christians. Let these things therefore be far from you, and by so much the more, as those wicked and senseless words bring with them evil works and gross exaggerations, despising all rule and measure. Hence we find among you hatred, envy and malice, proving too clearly that the kingdom of God does not abide among you, although charity, as the Scripture says, covers a multitude of sins. Nor can I sufficiently wonder how you find time for such things, surrounded as you are by so many enemies, who think of nothing but how they may injure you. If a third enemy arises, the Guelphs and the Ghibellines rush together. You will therefore perceive that I only write to you thus severely because it was necessary to arouse you. Had you not been slumbering till now in so deep a lethargy, you would not have allowed yourselves to become involved in such a load of iniquities. Weak are we indeed all our lives long, but what I have accused you of is true wickedness and pollution. I will not however drive your souls to despair through my censures; my end is rather to induce you to place your hope in the mercy of the Lord, who is ready to meet all those who turn to him. The evils which I have represented to you are of such a kind, that they cover you with shame and disgrace. They ought therefore to inspire you with this reflection, that God's honor may even be glorified by your offences; that is, if you seek your good in his healing mercy, for you will assuredly not call in vain upon the name of this most gracious Father. In the mean time, remember that it is your duty, as taught by the Lord himself, to practise a true repentance. Employ more diligence in the reading of the Scriptures, and in the other exercises of piety. Put away from you, once for all, those shameful sins of which you have been guilty. So regard the name of the Lord that it may never be pronounced among you but to his greatest honor. Let every one so live in his house, that he may not incur even the suspicion of unchastity. Be careful to subdue all the excesses of pride and wantonness, so unbecoming Christians, and to destroy hatred and enmity in their very roots, resolutely removing the causes of them, that is, unfaithfulness and wickedness. Let the pride which would make us subject everything to ourselves no longer exist among you. Pray especially that

the Lord may cast a look of mercy upon you, and put away the remembrance of your past sins, that He may the more effectually lead you back to his service. Your conversion is his work, and He must accomplish it in his own especial way ; otherwise you will be in danger, and well-known examples show the peril of such a course, of mocking the Lord with your follies. Beware of hardening your hearts against this admonition, lest you fall into the condemnation of those who, having cast away divine grace, kindle a fire against themselves in which they are at last consumed. But I hope better things of you, and trust that I may soon hear that of you which will remove my present distress. I pray to the Lord that the gifts which He bestows upon you may not prove fruitless, and that He may raise you again after your fall ; so that we may all behold in you the surest evidence of his unfathomable mercy, and that his holy name may be more honored among you than before."

9. The following is an extract from an unpublished letter, dated September 13, 1553, and addressed to a lady who had voluntarily left her native land for the sake of the pure doctrine. She was on her way to Geneva, when she was seized by some catholic priests. Calvin earnestly exhorted her to persevere with heroic courage, and to use no evasions. "If we find ourselves," he says, "in such necessity, that no other means can be found to deliver us from the tyranny of the enemies of the truth but those subterfuges which might turn us from the right path, there can then be no doubt that God has called upon us to seal our faith with our blood. If it come to this therefore, that you must turn either to the right or the left, rather die: and that neither threats nor anything else may be able to shake your resolution, direct your regard to the Son of God, who did not refuse to give his life for our salvation, that we might not think ours too precious to be devoted to his service: look also to the heavenly crown, which is prepared for those who have conquered in the struggle. Guard yourself above all things against drawing back, instead of pressing forward to the mark which God holds out to you."

Having given the unfortunate lady such counsel as her particular circumstances required, he concludes with these words: "For the rest, you must pray God, and this I do with you, that He may give you the spirit of prudence to choose that which is most fitting, the spirit of wisdom that you may be preserved

from error, and the spirit of power to be able constantly to do his will."

10. We extract from an unprinted letter, dated February 25, 1554, the following admonition addressed to a convert at Poitou : it warns him against being a mere nominal Christian :—"The name of Christian flies from mouth to mouth, but when men are called upon to humble themselves under the Gospel, which is the sceptre with which Christ exercises his dominion over us, they almost all turn away. Yea, it is only too common for people to adorn themselves hypocritically with the name of Christian, and then to desecrate it. It is therefore no little virtue to prove ourselves by action true disciples of the Son of God. You must accordingly so much the more intensely feel his mercy, which has led you so far ; for it is not our work when we come to Him, but He draws us to Himself ; and that his goodness may shine the more brightly, and be the better understood, He separates us from the rest, the poor blind sinners, whom we see wandering about us ; and shows us, as in a glass, the wretched condition in which we should be without Him, and this, that we may glorify Him the more for having delivered us from the horrible darkness of death. Therefore consider, Sir, the whole worth of the treasure which God bestows upon you, and make good use of it. When we see the iniquity which everywhere prevails, and the violence of Satan against those who take the right way, we must feel the necessity of turning our eyes to heaven, and praying for strength and perseverance to resist. If we wish to be made partakers of the glory of our Redeemer, we must be ready to bear the shame of his cross. I therefore pray you, as the necessity increases, to stir up and animate yourself, to contend resolutely against Satan and the world, and to die more and more unto yourself, that you may be renewed in God. And since, in order to love, we must have knowledge, I beseech you to read diligently those exhortations which lead thereto. The coldness which we see in so many, comes from the negligence which allows them to imagine that enough has been done if they have snatched, in a passing way, some few words of holy Scripture. We ought on the contrary, as St. Paul says, to become more and more like the Lord Jesus Christ, by beholding him in the mirror of his Gospel, and so to advance from glory to glory. He hereby shows, that the better we know Christ, the more nobly will his grace and power ope-

rate in our souls. Strive therefore to learn more and more, and especially from the consideration that you have your children to think of, whom God has entrusted to you, that you may consecrate them to Him, and that he may be their Father, even as He is yours. Be careful therefore to bring them up in his fear, and to preserve them from the filth and pollution in which we have been sunk. I know that the obstacles which Satan places in our path are difficult to overcome. Hence I admonish you to educate them rather as looking forwards to an inheritance in heaven, than as anxious for the perishable riches and honors of the present world."

11. He thus addresses a reformed congregation in a letter dated June, 1554 :—" Beloved brethren ! while we heartily sympathize with your afflictions, so do we rejoice and praise God for the steadfastness which He has given you, neither fear nor threatenings hindering your fidelity to Him and to the truth, his honor being to us dearer than life itself. We know indeed that if we resign this world for the glory of heaven, we make an exchange by which we can lose nothing, but must rather gain an unspeakable advantage. Therefore, my brethren, take courage and walk on the straight path which is appointed us. Be not deceived by the example of those who, after they had tasted the word of life, fell into condemnation. You know that the way of salvation is a narrow way, and that few have humility enough to follow Christ, or to bear his cross. They prefer indulging their vanity. You do well to meet together to call upon the name of the Lord, and to hear good and holy doctrine ; and the more especially as God has given grace to some among you to edify the rest. Our weakness renders such exercises necessary, and will do so till we have left this transitory life ; Satan, in the mean time, striving with all his power to destroy our faith." Calvin next shows the community, which he thus addresses, what ought to be done in its difficult circumstances respecting the sacraments. In his anxiety as a pastor, looking not merely to individuals, but to whole churches, it is interesting to see how he desired that each congregation should be regulated according to the order of the Gospel. As soon as a useful man was found, who felt himself called to teach, the life of the congregation commenced.

12. To some believers in Poitou he thus wrote, September 3d, 1554 :—" Do not deprive yourselves of the privilege of calling



upon God, and hearing useful discourses and admonitions, as a congregation. For although every one may, and ought, to pray to God for himself in secret, and may read the Scriptures at home, it is yet well pleasing to God to behold us assembling together in order to present to Him our solemn supplications, and the offering of our souls and bodies. When the wickedness of men prevents our doing this openly, we ought at least, according to the word of Scripture, to praise Him with his people, and to assemble here and there in little parties till all the members of the church are united in the kingdom of heaven. I know that you can only assemble with great danger, and that you are watched by the enemy. But the fear of persecution must not deter us from seeking the living pastures, and following our good Shepherd. Commend yourselves to Him, and be of good courage. He will then show that He cares for his poor lambs, and that it is his peculiar office to save them from the jaws of the wolf. We see how it fares with those who separate themselves: they sink into such negligence, that they at length lose all sense of good, and wholly estrange themselves from the work of their salvation. Therefore, dear brethren, be steadfast, and show that your zeal was not as a passing gale of wind, but let it increase more and more. I do not say that you ought not to guard yourselves from useless danger, for God is too indulgent towards us not to allow us to avoid the fury of the wicked. There is a middle way between timidity and rashness; that is, such a fear as neither lames the power of the Holy Spirit, nor turns us away from the means of salvation which God gives us. Keep yourselves therefore quietly in your retirement, but not so as to close the door to those who wish to enter the kingdom of God with you. Strive to win as many souls for the Lord as possible. For the rest, this social worship of God must urge you to bring up your families with so much the more care; for when a man returns from such an assembly, he will show that he has been strengthened for better things; he will have the odor of sanctity about him, which will diffuse itself over the whole house, and his entire life will be in harmony with his profession. The world in our days being in so wretched a state, you ought to be so much the more careful not to fall among its thorns. Short also as is the time of our pilgrimage, if we think of the joy which God has prepared for us in eternity, we shall not grow weary before half our course is run. Yea, if we think of the inestimable treasures provided for us by our heavenly Father, of those

boundless riches of his grace which He has made known to us, we must be degenerate indeed if we feel not moved and incited to devote ourselves to his service; or rather, if we be not so enraptured with his love as to forget both ourselves, and all that can bind us to the present world."

13. Calvin had sent two preachers to a church. He praises the steadfastness of the community, which, in spite of persecution, persevered in keeping up its religious services, and describes the pious zeal of the two ministers, whilst he admonishes the congregation to honor them by obedience and faithfulness, and so to recompense them for the offering which they brought it. He says, "We are so much the more convinced that you will receive them well, and will strive to learn of them, since this will be to encourage them to labor more and more diligently, when they see that their efforts are not in vain. Whatever the storms which Satan excites against you, your steadfastness and patience in the ways of God must never be shaken. To persevere in that which is good, we must resist temptation. We mention this, because we have lately heard of the oppression to which your neighbors are exposed. But far be it from you to allow the fear of similar attacks to damp your zeal; let it rather incite you to arm yourselves more effectually, that you may not be overcome in the approaching conflict. We know well that you cannot altogether avoid some feeling of alarm at the first view of these things. Faith may still be weak in some of you; but if you feel your weakness, hasten to Him who can fortify you with invincible strength, and you will discover that He is ever present to his people as a sure support. It is in all respects a sad condition to be oppressed and afflicted for that which is good; but since the Lord, whom we dare not resist, has subjected us to it, we must submit, and take as it were the bridle in our mouths, in order, according to his own admonition, to keep our souls in patience; which we cannot do, unless, following the example of David, we regard God's mercy as better than all that is in the world, and resign ourselves wholly to his protection, being content rather to waste away in misery, hemmed in by a thousand kinds of death, than to doubt his word and make our escape through the slough. Were we truly convinced that God will remain faithful to all his precious promises, and that the most acceptable offering we can make Him is to depend confidently upon them, we should not be so negli-

gent and backward to serve Him as witnesses, when He calls upon us to render our testimony.

“And further: while He shields us with his protecting arm, with more care than the hen gathers her young under her wing, so will He certainly not suffer the enemy to gain any advantage over us, unless to prove our faith, and in so far as it may tend to our good. Let us therefore learn to rest assured, that if we act according to his commands, we are not forsaken, but that He ever stretches out his hand over us; yea, that all the angels are such protecting hands for us, as He has promised. While you see therefore that freedom is given to Satan to afflict and sore oppress the poor church, do you assemble together under the banner of Jesus Christ; go, that is, into his school, that you may daily become better instructed therein, and pray God for your poor little congregation of redeemed ones; that it may please Him to have pity on you, and on your brethren, who are engaged in a like conflict.”

From the same rich store of manuscript letters we select the following passages. To a lady who, after her conversion, returned to the world and then repented, he wrote, Feb. 2, 1552:—“The devil gained indeed so excellent a victory, that we were constrained to bow our head with a sigh. But our good God is always ready to pardon and receive us again, when we have fallen, lest it should be a fall unto death; and therefore I pray you to take courage; and if the enemy has once gained an advantage over us, through our weakness, we must allow him no perfect triumph, but must show that those whom God has raised up again, are prepared with redoubled strength for all conflicts.”

The letters which Calvin wrote about this time to the king of Navarre, to queen Johanna, queen Margaret, and to some of the nobility of France, as the lord and lady Coligny, are remarkable for the dignity and force with which he addressed the great on spiritual subjects.

15. The following passage occurs in a letter to the duke of Longueville:—“Every earthly band must be trodden under-foot, to give honor to the Lord alone, on whom all these relations are dependent. You know by experience that I have reason to say this. Much contradiction must be endured; nor can you yield without becoming false to Him who has purchased you at so great a price, that you might be consecrated to his service. Arm yourself therefore with such courage, that neither

the favor nor the hatred of men may be able to keep you back from glorifying Him, who so well deserves to be preferred before all mortal and perishable creatures. But while so many, who call themselves faithful, are devoted to sinful pleasures, take heed that you do not follow their example, lest the light which God has given you be extinguished. Learn to bear the yoke of Christ; you will find it soft and easy."

16. In a letter to a lady, who was striving for knowledge and salvation, he thus expresses himself:—"He who pleases himself in his wickedness, closes, as it were, the door against God, and prevents his having mercy upon him."

17. On the 23d of February, 1559, he wrote to Legrant:—"I should never have expected to find you guilty of such madness as to listen to the falsehoods of Satan, in that cursed school which sets at naught all religion, and tempts men to licentiousness, making a mock of God and whatever is holy. Experience shows what fine things you have learnt there,—to scatter jests about, like deadly poison, and so to scandalize the poor and already distracted church. Reflect on the words,—‘Woe to him through whom offences come.’ I spare you not, that God may spare you. I will let you feel your wretchedness, that you may the more willingly seek the cure. Trust not to your folly, but return to the fold of Christ, and be assured that all who loved you in former times will be filled with joy to be able to love you again more than ever. And I especially, if I hear those good tidings, will no more think of the sins which your heavenly Father may, I trust, have forgiven you, but shall love you with greater tenderness, and feel myself freed from my present anguish. And now I pray God to guide you by his Spirit, and to be with your family."

18. In a letter to some prisoners, who were doubting whether they might not defend themselves, he gives the fine apostolic counsel not to do it, and says,—“Such plans of defence never come from God."

19. In a letter to the young lady de Longeman, who was imprisoned in Paris on account of her faith, he admonishes her not to shrink from martyrdom, urging this heroic sentiment:—"A man may lose an eternal crown by endeavoring to save only three days of his life." Other letters also were addressed to the same persons, till they gained the victory. The following for example, was sent in 1558, to Audelot, a prisoner at Melun:—

20. "You have often, in earlier times, hazarded your life for



your earthly princes, and would still be ready to do so. But ought the great King of heaven and earth to be considered less than they? We know that, according to all the rights of nature, we ourselves properly pertain to Him, for He shed his blood for our salvation, and all which we do for Him will prove useful and salutary to us."

It is interesting also to see how he comforts struggling souls, and encourages those who have fallen, by his united gentleness and severity. He accuses them of sin, but adds the following expression:—"You should not be sorrowful overmuch." Several other letters exist in Crespin's martyrology, and he repeatedly utters the beautiful sentiment:—"So far ought you to be from looking with horror at suffering, that you should thank God for the honor which He has conferred upon you, in thus calling you, while still in your weakness, to suffer for his name's sake."

21. While Calvin here exhibited the force and nobility of his spirit, so, when engaged with men of logical minds, he went to work as a logician to destroy error in their souls. As illustrations of his skill in utterly annihilating sophistical objections, we may allude to his confutation of the errors of Menno Simonis and Lelius Socinus, and, still further, to his treatment of the subtle reasonings of a Jew, as may be seen in his correspondence.\* Against Menno's paradoxical propositions, he supported the true human nature of Christ, and showed its actual union with his godhead. In arguing with Lelius, he treated of the doctrine of justification, by the free grace of God, in agreement with the merits of Christ, and of the manner in which this free grace of God exhibits itself even in disbelievers and apostates. In the essay which contains the defence of the Christian faith against the sarcasms and quibbles of the Jew, Calvin first enumerates, under twenty-three heads, the objections of his opponent; and then, for the sake of illustration, contrasts with them certain difficulties which might be created by a gross and carnal interpretation, as to the genuineness and contents of the Old Testament. Having answered these supposed objections, according to the true spiritual understanding of the holy Scriptures, both old and new, he shows the nature of the revelation communicated by both.

Numberless questions were put to Calvin, not only by individuals but by whole communities. His opinions had the force of

\* Ed. Laus. Ep. 354, Ed. Amst. pp. 186, 192, 197.

a law for the synods; partly because his voice was as that of the father of the church, and he might be considered almost as its conscience; and partly because his answers always met the difficulty, and were expressed with clearness and brevity, honestly and moderately. The national synod of Verteuil adopted, in the year 1567, a great number of decisions of this kind, as canonical. They chiefly respected questions of marriage and of the ecclesiastical relations between protestants and catholics;\* but among them are the following.

He was asked whether it was lawful to make money by usury, and especially whether it was forbidden the clergy? He answered,† “Jeremiah says,‡ ‘I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury.’ If the minister avoid such things he will do wisely; and yet, since it is better for him to lend his money on interest than to be engaged in any art or traffic himself, for this might take him from his duties, I do not see why this should be altogether condemned. This condition however might be suggested, that the minister should not lend his money at a fixed interest, but should entrust it to some good and honorable man, and be contented with such a return as the blessing arising from the use of the money might justify his receiving.” Again, “If we absolutely condemn the receiving of interest for money, we put the conscience into closer bonds than the Lord himself has done; but if we allow the least liberty in this respect, excuse will be taken to introduce the greatest license.”§

The count of Cursol, a protestant, had proposed to him a

\* Aymon. Synodes Nat. des Eglises Ref. de F. T. i. pp. 81-87.

† Ep. 290. Ed. Amst. p. 217.

‡ Chap. xv. ver. 10.

§ Calvin proceeds to show that receiving interest for money is not actually forbidden in the Gospel. What Christ says, Luke vi. 35, “Lend, hoping for nothing again,” is improperly applied to this question; our Lord only commanding us thereby to give our money to the poor rather than to the rich. He then quotes the passages in the Old Testament where usury is most strictly forbidden, and adds, that the Israelites were placed under circumstances which rendered usury unnecessary. We however are not so situated, and we have therefore only to avoid doing aught which is contrary to justice and charity. Money, he reasons, is a possession. Now, every possession brings its proper return, as houses, lands, &c., and why should not money? Usury, therefore, is allowable under the following conditions:—1. Money must not be lent to a poor man in such a way, that if he fall into misfortune he may be compelled to pay a yearly interest. 2. He who lends must not have mere gain in view. 3. Justice must never be forgotten, nor Christ’s precept, “Do unto others as ye would they should do unto you.” 4. He who receives the money must gain as much or more from it. 5. Our decision as to the justice of the proceeding must be according to the Word of God, and not according to human notions. 6. We must have respect also to the good of the place in which we reside. 7. The legal interest allowed in our country must not be exceeded.—Ed. Amst. p. 223.

question of conscience, whether, that is, he might attend his prince to a catholic church? Calvin answered,\* "It is not lawful to do so, because such conduct would be a scandal to the godly, and an occasion of abuse to the wicked. The example of Naaman is not applicable in this case, for he was the only worshipper of God in Syria, and could therefore give no offence to any one. He had himself also an altar of the true God. The danger you may be in of losing your rank, and that to the prejudice of the church, is no reason for your yielding. We must not 'do evil that good may come.' A proper apology to the prince cannot be wanting: he would probably readily excuse your absence for three days in the year, under the plea that you were not well." This escaped Calvin in the course of writing, for he adds, "Suffer me to say this in jest; for really to pretend a sickness would be nothing less than to show yourself ashamed of the Gospel. If you consider this maturely, you will conclude with Paul, that you could not partake of the holy sacrament while holding communion with idolaters, especially as in this case it would be connected with scandal. I exhort you therefore to turn with all your heart in prayer to God, and to beseech Him to give you strength and the necessary weapons, that you may be properly prepared for the battle of the Lord."

During the persecutions in France he was asked, whether a widow might leave her children, if circumstances led her to withdraw from a catholic country. He answered very justly, "Nothing ought to be dearer to her than the souls of her children; and she can neither naturally, nor as a Christian, leave them behind. But whether a married woman may leave her husband on account of religion, is a difficult question to decide: nothing but the most manifest necessity could justify her doing so: severe treatment would not be a sufficient reason. Should she however be apparently in danger of losing her life, through avoiding idolatry, she may then leave her husband."

A reformer, who had a catholic wife and children, was obliged to leave his country: he asked how he ought to act in respect to his wife, and received the following answer:—"A pious man having a catholic wife, and being obliged to flee, will first do all that is possible, by the grace of God, to convert her. Should he however not succeed, and be obliged to depart, he must not leave her without laboring to the uttermost to draw her out of the pit. But if the danger be too pressing to suffer him to do

\* Epis. 340, July 31, 1563.

this, the claim of such a wife upon her husband ceases. If he have children, let him take them with him, as his greatest treasure; as a pledge entrusted to him by God.”\*

In the epistle which he addressed to the brethren at Aix, he decided, in a truly apostolic manner, the difficult question, whether it be lawful in times of persecution to meet force with force:—“I know well,” he says, “that a false pretence is not wanting to defend the proceeding, when an excited people oppose oppressive power by violence; since this is not altogether the same as resistance to lawful authority, the very laws themselves allowing every one to take arms to defend himself against robbers. But the loftier wisdom of the Gospel teaches us to hold fast by the rules taught us by our heavenly Master, namely, ‘to possess our souls in patience.’† And certain it is, that our only secure refuge against the heat, the stormy wind, and every other danger, is under the shadow of his wings. As soon, however, as we begin to resist force by force, we put away his hand and his help from us. The apostle therefore admonishes us to leave it to God to avenge us, and to support ourselves on his promises, according to which He will protect his people against the rage of the wicked. The blood of the saints cries from earth to heaven, and is the seed of the church.” To the question, whether it be lawful to aid a believer’s escape from prison, by the use of keys surreptitiously obtained, by money, or by similar means, Calvin replied,‡ “I should never advise or approve of such a proceeding, but I should heartily rejoice at the deliverance of any one, and should make it the subject of my prayers, if it could be effected without offence to the good. The primitive church prayed for those that were bound,§ but did nothing further. Paul did not wish to be ransomed.”

It is worthy of remark, that in the collection of decisions, adopted by the synod of Verteuil, is the following, insisting upon the tenderness to be exercised towards children. “Parents,” it is said, “may not oblige their children to marry against their inclination. In the case in which a young man, or a young woman, dislikes the person proposed to him or her, the modesty and reverence which children owe to their parents must be shown if they refuse the offer, but they are not to be punished for rejecting it.” On the other hand, he says,|| “A young man who marries against the wishes of his parents should know

\* Ed. Amst. p. 216.  
§ Acts xxiv. 26.

† Luke xxi. 19.

‡ Epis. 375. Ed. Amst. p. 215.

|| Epis. 299. Ed. Amst. p. 226.



that he will be justly punished for his folly, if he have a disobedient wife. Let him not be surprised that, having neglected the duty which he owed to God and his parents, he finds himself properly repaid by her contradiction."

Calvin wished marriages to be celebrated with great solemnity: he directed the bridal party to proceed to church without the beating of drums or music, but seriously, as became Christians, as soon as the bells ceased; and the ceremony was to be performed before the sermon, in the presence of the whole congregation. If the party came too late they were to be sent back.

To the question whether, if any one married his mistress, she ought then to be treated as a good and virtuous woman, Calvin answers, "Certain it is that the discipline of the church teaches us to condemn such wild marriages, but we must not shut the door to repentance by prohibiting a legitimate union." To the inquiry whether any kind of games might be allowed, he replies,\* "With respect to play, a certain measure must be observed. In the first place, not a word is to be said about playing for money, lest the love of gain should lure the weak to sin. In the second place, it is contrary to our duty to lavish our time in amusements of this kind; nor must the disorderly conduct spoken of by St. Paul† be endured, but must be punished with excommunication."‡

On the outward moral conduct of Christians in the world, he says,§ "Nothing can be better or more prudent than to avoid a frequent attendance at those scenes in which we must struggle with the world, unless we mean to betray the honor of God by an infamous cowardice. If, however, a person be present at a marriage, he ought to refrain from dancing: merely being present is not reprehensible; but we must take care not to offend others by our moral bearing. Let our sedateness act with the force of a severe censure, bridling the licentiousness of the rest."

To the question, whether it be a duty to chastise the foolish and sinful speeches of wicked companies, he replies, "No rule can be given on this subject, but we should not let our anger be silent when a proper opportunity occurs for speaking. Prudence, however, will often teach us to refrain. Still, when we are without tongues among such men, we should let them see, like righteous Lot, how much pain we suffer from their conduct. The best rule we can follow is, to employ every means in our

\* Epis. 366. Ed. Amst. p. 214.

† Epis. 258. Ed. Amst. p. 126.

‡ 2 Thess. iii. 11-14.

§ Epis. 258.

power to oppose sin, to edify society, to prevent the blaspheming of God's name, and the perversion of the weak, who often have a right will, but are ruined from not being warned in time."\*

The theatre, in a pleasure-loving city like Geneva, was another difficult subject for consideration. In the middle ages the theatrical element was, it is well known, often employed for religious purposes, and this Calvin does not seem to have altogether reprobated; for in the state-register of January 6, 1558, it is said, the minister Enoch proposed, in the presence of the Bernese envoys, and in commemoration of the league with Switzerland, that a tragedy should be performed, representing the martyrdom of the five young Bernese (?)† students at Lyons; the parts to be undertaken by children. When, however, some time before this, a company of players wished to perform in Geneva, and the council desired Calvin's opinion, he answered, with the rest of the ministers, "that they considered, on many accounts, such amusements unprofitable, but that they would offer no opposition, if the council saw good to allow the performances." One of the clergy declaimed in the pulpit against the players, although their pieces were founded on "The Acts of the Apostles." The people were greatly exasperated, and Calvin was obliged to tranquillize them by a sermon. In the rules of discipline, dramatic performances were only allowed as a scholastic exercise.

The duchess of Ferrara once asked him whether she was bound by an oath extorted from her. He answered,‡ "With regard to the oath to which you were forced, you are not bound to keep it, inasmuch as they who tendered it acted unrighteously, and dishonored God. A double condemnation fell upon Herod, because he remained true to his." When some one expressed himself as distressed in his conscience, because his child had died unbaptized, Calvin wrote to him, "Baptism is indeed the sign of salvation, and the seal, that we are accepted of God. But in either circumstance we are inscribed in the book of life, as well by the free-grace of God as by his promises. Our children accordingly are redeemed, for it is written, 'I am the God of thy children;' otherwise they could not be baptized. If your own salvation, therefore, be secured by the promise, and be

\* Aymon, l. c. s. 252.

† Five *French* students are known to have suffered in 1553, and five others were executed at Chambéry in 1555.

‡ MSS. Gen. July 5, 1560.

well-grounded in itself, we cannot suppose the children who die before baptism to be lost. By giving too much honor to the outward sign, we should offend God ; and by supposing that our salvation is not sufficiently secured by his promise, we should throw a doubt upon his truth. There being no disrespect then to the sacrament on your part, no harm can happen to your child, because it died before it was possible for you to bring it to baptism."

We learn from the state-register of March 13, 1559, that romance-reading was altogether prohibited in Geneva. It is said :—"Inasmuch as many persons are in the habit of reading *Amadis de Gaule*, which contains much that is licentious and wicked, let them be gravely admonished, and let the said book be abolished and destroyed." Shortly after Calvin's time, Henry Stephens was excommunicated and imprisoned, because he had written a dissolute book. In conclusion, we refer to a little work entitled 'The Life of the Christian, and a View of Eternal Life,' as affording a further proof of Calvin's spiritual feelings, and care for souls.

It may be easily understood what a powerful influence such moral force, purity and holiness, combined with so much wisdom and ability, must have exercised in France, and on the whole church. Calvin's heroism aroused the noblest feelings in the hearts of believers. I may here mention the minister P. Brully, one of his followers in Strasburg. Brully, though happily married, could not be restrained from going to preach the pure Gospel at Tournai, where he suffered martyrdom with heroic firmness. The letters which he wrote to his wife, shortly before his death, are still preserved. Numberless simple-minded Christians thus proclaimed their faith in Christ, while exposed to the most furious rage of their enemies. We can hence understand how, in so short a time, 2150 churches arose, all of which were ready to seal the truth with their blood : it was with joy indeed that these confessors of the Gospel found themselves called to such an honor. It was the pure apostolic element in Calvin's character which shone so brightly forth : he had no wish to forward a political party, but the kingdom of Christ, a spiritual theocracy. Towards this end it was that he strove with such untiring energy, continually illustrating the words which he addressed to Farel at the commencement of his course, "*In specula nostra ad finem usque perstemus.*" He could safely say, "I can number myriads of children in every part of the Christian

world ;" and all, all of these whom he so greatly helped will stand forth with flaming swords to defend him against the slanderers and gainsayers, who would so fain, even to the present day, dispute the purity of his faith. That which appears to us so rough in his manner, and in his system, was, in its original form in his spirit,—as for example, the exhibition of God's righteousness in election, and the order of the church,—a manifest sign of his sending, and a blessing for the sick and slumbering world. And hence it was that all healthy minds thirsted after it, and rejoiced in the strength which it imparted.

Before we proceed to show how Calvin assailed the anti-christian party in Geneva, in order to establish his system there, and to obtain the concurrence of the Zurichers, we must turn our attention to his general exertions at this period, which will place him before us in his relation to the church at large. Although the ecclesiastical arrangements, of which we have hitherto spoken, formed the main object of his labors, in the portion of his life thus far described, we now begin to discover, in some measure, his outward struggles, which however did not reach their highest point till the period to be spoken of in the third division of this work.

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## CHAPTER IX.

CALVIN'S GENERAL ACTIVITY.—HE ATTACKS THE CATHOLICS.  
—POPE PAUL III.—WRITES AGAINST PIGHIUS ON FREE  
GRACE.—MELANCTHON.—THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.

WE see all the opposing elements of the sixteenth century rushing into conflict, at the epoch when the new element of Calvinism began to exercise its mighty and restraining influence on the world. It was a time of crisis in the life of the church. On the one side was the catholic, on the other the protestant, element ; here and there the antichristian, and the fury of persecution. Against all this Calvin had to strive to accomplish the reformation. His first step was against the catholic church, and the Sorbonne, which represented its arrogant ignorance, and sought to uphold the old errors against the new spirit.



Albert Pighius is the representative of the catholic theology. Pope Paul III., who retained nothing of the old, venerable, catholic and historical principle—the theocratic development of Christianity—but the sin with which it has been combined, represented the old declining institution. We shall soon see Calvin's attack on the French and English, and even on the Germans. Luther dies, and the storm which he had foreseen immediately breaks out. At this great crisis, the faith of the church is proved by the Interim. Catholicism endeavors to strengthen itself in the council of Trent, by an inward unity of doctrine, while protestantism is torn by dissensions. Calvin now feels more deeply than ever the necessity of a firm foundation for the evangelical church, and shoots his darts on all sides. A series of works followed fast upon each other, directed to the princes assembled at Spire, against the Tridentine decrees, against the Interim, and, requiring only a common explanation, against relics and astrology. He entered into correspondence with the Poles. A great number of exegetical works also appeared at this time, and opened the way for a right system of interpretation, while they opposed that lawless style of exegesis which found its representative in the celebrated Castellio, who, setting at naught the well-established dogmatic rule of the symbolical books, went ignorantly before his time, and disregarded the sacred unity of the faith, but whom we must never number among the libertine enemies of our reformer. Calvin was in fact like a lion, turning on all sides to defend his young. We see in his spirit, remarkably enough, the transition from the middle ages to the new period of development,—the sturdy roughness of the early times, and the finer cultivation of the later,—the old ideas once so passionately embraced, and the Christian element, inspiring a forefeeling of the future establishment of all things according to Christian-theocratic ideas, and a unity arising from the system of synodal rule. We everywhere, in short, see the man who felt, in the most definite manner, the command of God to restore union to the distracted church, and to proclaim the divine judgments to an impious age, which gave to man the honor which belongs to God alone.

The high-school at Paris had the hardihood, in 1542, to publish twenty-five new articles, as an addition to the Christian creed. This would never have been suffered by the people, but the articles, either through fear or ignorance, were subscribed by the king, and made the subject of an edict. Calvin felt it his

duty to oppose these articles by the strongest arguments, and at the same time to exhibit, with easy humor, the ignorance of the Sorbonnists. He begins by proving each article in an ironical manner, and according to catholic reasoning, afterwards confuting it by earnest and erudite arguments. Pascal, who with similar irony so victoriously employed the acts of the Jesuits to overthrow their doctrines, had he read this work, would have found it containing a rich fund of observation, and well calculated to direct attention to the perversions of Romanism. It undoubtedly deserved especial notice, both in France and Italy, for its popular style, and its consequent fitness to prevent the success of the experiment to re-establish the Romanism of former times. We might republish it under the title of 'New Arguments for the Truth of the Romish Faith.'

The following are a specimen of these new and humorous arguments.

In the seventh article, which treats of the communion under one form, the Sorbonnists say,—“The sacrament under both forms is not necessary to the laity. Many good reasons justified the early church in administering it to the people under only one form.” Calvin says:—“This may be thus proved. There is danger that the blood might be spilt. Now if the Lutherans ask whether the church be wiser than Christ, who did not seem to consider this, I answer, that Christ did consider it, but was silent on the subject, because he wished to try the wisdom of his church. There is still however a little difficulty remaining. The body of the Lord must be enclosed in the sacred chest, that it may be carried to the sick: but if the blood were thus kept, it would become vinegar, and would be no longer blood. The Lutherans would laugh now and say, ‘You see well enough that this is mere wine,’ which would be contrary to the doctrine of transubstantiation. In the next place, it is but proper that the clergy should have a privilege, which may tend to keep down the boasting of the laity. There would also be a further cause for apprehension, were the people allowed to drink the blood; for the taste of it might excite the suspicion in this or that man that it was pure wine; and what an evil, what a scandal this would be! But if any one should argue, that the church has not the right so to act against the words, or so to oppose a commandment, of Christ, I answer, that the commandment, ‘Drink ye all of this,’ is only to be taken in the sense of an admonition; and hence it is a counsel,

and not a command. I dare scarcely venture, and yet it is a matter of great importance, to suggest, that there are wine-haters who would not for all the world drink wine, and who still could not be deprived of the cup. I presume however to say this, since the Lutherans laugh in the sleeve, and think, if our view be correct, there is no more wine, but blood."

In the twenty-third article, the Sorbonnists say, "We must firmly believe that there is a high-priest in the militant church, established by divine right, whom all Christians must obey, and who has authority to impart absolution."

"I prove this position," says Calvin, "by the word addressed to Peter, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, &c.' If now a Lutheran should say, that Peter was here named as one of the faithful; that the rock was the foundation-stone of the church of Christ; that Peter was a bad foundation-stone because he denied Christ, and that, according to Paul, no one might lay any other foundation but Christ,—this position must in no wise be allowed. Then, since a different exposition is favorable to Rome, you will know the rule from its proper application, that that which is favorable should be extended, *Quod favores ampliari*. The Lutherans however, once for all, know that Christ gave the Roman primacy to Peter: but it does not follow therefrom that he gave it to all his successors. They must therefore pretend that all should be regarded as children of Satan; for Christ says to Peter himself, 'Thou art a Satan; get thee behind me.' They think, that is, that if the popes succeed him in the one title, they must also follow him in the other. But here it should be answered, according to the rule of the jurists, that 'that which is odious ought to be restricted;' *odia sunt restringenda*. The difficulty however may be removed in another manner. You can say,—Christ in the first instance spoke to Peter as to the future pope, but in the second as to a private person. They argue still further: Why has Peter given the eternal succession, the primacy, to the city of Rome, and not to Antioch? for he had been bishop in both places. The answer to this is, a place obtains its renown through the death of a great man, especially when the blood of a martyr has been shed there, for this avails much with God, as we say in a hymn sung on St. Peter's day. They meet this by the argument, that, according to such reasoning, James and John must have held the second and third rank in their churches, as Peter held the first at Rome; it being St. Paul's remark, that these three were

as pillars of the primitive church. Here it may be answered, that if the others have not been sufficiently zealous in this respect, or have not defended their rights with proper courage, Rome ought not to suffer from their negligence; that Jerusalem and Ephesus deserve to be humbled for their foolish cowardice, whilst Rome, which has always struggled for its honor with determined energy, is properly acknowledged as the first of cities." \*

The weapons furnished by wit and irony were those most likely, at that time, to prevail in France, and, when united with earnestness, were of real use. But the Institute of the Sorbonne still continued a powerful and dangerous enemy to the Gospel: it was an arm of the court of Rome, supported by its mightiest influence, ever exercising a blind rage against truth, and distinguished only by a rude fanaticism. Established in the reign of Louis VII. by Robert Sorbon, as a humble seminary, it was known till the time of Louis IX. by the name of "The Poor Sorbonne;" but it so rapidly increased in power and influence, that the decrees of this high-school soon affected the very life of both church and state. In the dark ages it disgraced itself by the sentence which it pronounced upon the heroic Joan of Arc, and others, and at the period of the Reformation it was no less infamously celebrated by its irreconcilable hatred to the light, of whose spirit it was the offspring. Thus it persecuted every friend of true learning and intelligence; among others, that lucid thinker Ramus, the enemy of scholasticism. It unceasingly endeavored to exasperate the people against the Lutherans, as the reformers were called in France till the Colloquy at Poissi; and the religious war must consequently be attributed, in part, to its agency.

It is instructive, however, for all ages to observe, with what force the spirit of evil strove against the light in that period of confusion, and what sacrifices, what efforts were required to bring about, step by step, the new order of things. Nor will the church, in the present day, obtain by any other means the victory over unbelief, or accomplish, by the conversion of the

\* Calvin has a further observation on this subject, and remarks that if the argument for Rome were valid, it might be contended that the Arabian wilderness ought to have been regarded as the capital of the ancient people of God, since it was there that Moses, the first of the prophets, preached and died, and that Aaron exercised his office. Jerusalem again was the place in which our Lord performed his work as the chief bishop, and also died. Answers and rejoinders are given like those above-cited.



heathen, the diffusion of the Gospel over all the world. We have an instance of this tumultuous conflict of opposing powers in the following strife.

Alexander Farnese, a Roman, succeeded Clemens VII. in 1534, on the papal throne. He was a worthy follower of Alexander VI., and a fitting predecessor of Paul IV. For the upholding of his selfish rule, he introduced into his dishonest policy the lofty principle of the earlier popes, Gregory VII. and Innocent III., who, contending in the name of God, secured a great degree of unity in spiritual things against the invasions of the temporal power, and subdued the wild, rude spirit of the middle ages. Although it was Paul's constant effort, in his struggles with Charles of Spain, to protect the authority of the Roman see, he had too little knowledge of the age in which he lived: he hated the idea of reformation, and wished to support the papal throne without the aid of Christianity. The Inquisition was re-established at his desire, and the order of the Jesuits owed its firmest support to his favor. It was at his instance that the council, which subsequently assembled at Trent, first met at Mantua. He rejected the Interim, and by his refusal to be reconciled to Henry VIII. England was lost to the catholic church. His private life was a scandal to the church: he had a daughter and a son, Peter Louis Farnese, duke of Parma and Piacenza, whom the people so detested that they arose tumultuously and murdered him. His grandson, Octavio Farnese, was as profligate as himself. It was not till the year 1549 that Paul III. was summoned to give an account of his stewardship as head of the Christian church: he remained true to his character to the last. Hence the gross hypocrisy of the pious expressions by which he sought to render his death respectable.

The emperor of Germany, involved in a war with France, endeavored to tranquillize the country at the diet of Spire, and promised, in a decree, that whatever concerned the affairs of religion should remain for the present on the same footing. He added however that he would take care to assemble a general, or at least a national, synod, to put an end to the existing disorders. No sooner was the pope made acquainted with the emperor's sentiments on this point, than he exhibited the strongest indignation. Charles had proposed the step without consulting the pontiff, and had placed catholics and heretics in the same rank: he therefore addressed an admonition, not unmingled with threats, to the emperor. The latter are well-worth

notice for their hypocritical, paternal tone, it being easy to see in what relation the pope stood to the emperor, and by what kind of Scriptural reasoning he hoped to attain his end. "The example," he said, "of Eli admonished him to warn the emperor, his dear son, and the eldest son of the church, lest by neglecting to do so, he might bring upon himself the divine displeasure. But he would warn him, not as an undutiful, but as a good son. It would be charged upon him as the result of his want of paternal care, if the emperor failed in anything which regarded the pope. Uzziah died because he merely touched the ark of the covenant, and endeavored to hold it up when the oxen stumbled, that being the duty of the Levites. You may expect the same fate if you listen to those who have always the word 'reformation' in their mouths, or if you encourage the proposed assembly of the church. Thus it also happened to Dathan, Abiram and Corah, who opposed the sole priesthood of Aaron. Uzziah's act arose from pride. But you, beloved son, are seeking to intrude even into the holy place. Constantine, Theodosius, and Charles the Great were blessed and victorious because they subjected themselves to the priests and the popes. The undutiful have ever been exposed to punishment. Anastasius, for example, who opposed pope Gelasius, was struck dead by lightning,—a monument of God's wrath."

This passage is followed by a list of all the undutiful kings and emperors whom God, or the popes, had humbled up to the time of Henry and Frederic II. But delusion of mind is one of the greatest chastisements which such people can suffer, and the most criminal are those who wound the unity of the church by assailing the pope. Even whole nations have been thus punished for opposing the papal chair, as the Jews and the Greeks. "But God forbid that you, the successor of Christian emperors, should ever be found guilty of such a sin. We have warned you as a father anxious for the salvation and the honor of his beloved son. Follow the example of Constantine, who, although he was asked even by priests to determine a controversy, answered, 'God has appointed you priests and judges over us: you cannot be judged by men, but by God only.' We wish to see you become like this great emperor."

Calvin's original answer at once overthrew and exposed this hypocrisy. His language is not less severe than that of Luther in his polemical writings. "If this instance of God's anger against Eli so greatly terrifies the holy father, we cannot but

wonder, that, afflicted as he is at the supposed sin of the emperor, he allows himself to sleep over the offences of his own children. God punished the drowsiness of Eli, neglecting as he did to punish his children. But the apostle Paul directs that the children of a Christian bishop should be of good conversation, and fearing the Lord. Now, our pope Paul Farnese has a son, and this son has children; and moreover he has bastards; and this old man, who stands on the verge of the grave, this half-corrupted carcass, looks still for children. Who is Peter Louis? I could relate the most horrible things of him, and should only speak the truth. Italy has never before produced such a monster. Why then do you slumber, pope, while the debaucheries of your son ascend to heaven; while the whole earth is filled with their stench, and all the world cries aloud against them? Would not this be the time for you to exercise your severity? What shall I say of his avarice; of his frauds; of his cruelty? All are astounded at his wickedness. His father alone beholds it with indifference. If Eli then was punished for his laxity, shall pope Paul remain unpunished, when he closes both his eyes and his mouth, and fosters such iniquity, calling it good? Thou shameful pope, hast thou no fear of the judgments of God?

“But we have spoken enough of your natural children. You boast yourself the father of all Christians, and yet continue silent amidst the distractions of the world, which you are suffering to perish. If God then did not spare Eli, what punishment ought you not to expect? But I will press the matter still more strongly upon you. How is it with your own particular diocese, which ought to be sacred to you, and like a family? What are your vicars about? What is the work carried on? How do your clergy behave themselves? Could we find a Sodom where greater wickedness prevailed, where sin was less punished, or where iniquity more shamefully exalted itself? And can you believe then that the wrath of God will pursue you for this one fault, that is, for suffering the protestants to enjoy peace and justice till the religious differences are settled?”

Calvin next shows, from church history, that the right of assembling councils belonged, in the primitive times, to the emperor, and not to the pope, and then continues in a style of irony to say: “What a marvellous change! The pope is become so pious, that if he only hears that the protestants are to be left in peace for awhile, he is seized with an ague? But it is

as wonderful to see, on the other side, with what perfect security he confers with harlots, and how he shrinks not from the contamination of a profitable treaty with the Jews, permitting them, for the payment of a yearly tribute, to abuse the Gospel without fear of punishment, and to plunder openly under the name of usury: yea, not opposing even the Turks! Still the holiness of the pope shines manifestly forth in all this, for he fears, with the apostle Paul, that 'evil communications may corrupt good manners!' O thou godless apostate! What hast thou agreeing with these words? Thou art the chief and leader of all that is atheistic; thou spendest thy days in framing treasons, wars and frauds of every kind; in spoiling and ruining the innocent, or in marring religion by the vilest plots; and what time then remains to thee, thou devoteest pleasantly to the society of thine epicurean friends, or wallowest like a swine in the midst of thine harlots. All thy words and deeds savor of a horrible unbelief."

In the following section Calvin refutes the historical facts adduced by the pope, and which were intended to show that all who did not remain at peace with Rome were unfortunate. "The pope," he says, "wishes to prove that there is but one sin deserving of God's anger, and which may be considered as the source of all evil; and this one sin is, not to do what the pope orders, or not to adore his holiness instead of the holiness of God. Certain it is that Christ is not a little angry when any one despises his vicar. But wilt thou, thou foul-mouth, thus continue to make a mockery of the Son of God? Who gave thee this place of honor? According to the testimony of the apostle, no one ought to take such an office except he be called. With what face canst thou claim such a proud title? Even should an angel usurp it, he ought to be anathematized. Gregory, thy predecessor, as thou pretendest, called those who wished to name him a bishop above all other bishops, whether at Rome or elsewhere, wicked, godless people; scandalizers of the church, servants of the devil, and forerunners of antichrist. Choose now which thou wilt; thou must either condemn Gregory as a blasphemer against the papal chair, or pronounce this sentence upon thyself. If, on the other hand, we pardon this blasphemy, and regard as erroneous the opinion of Cyprian, that there is no other bishopric in the world but the bishopric of Christ, which pertains to all; if we also allow that one man alone may engross this dignity, even then, where



can be by thy claim to it, thou wretched robber? Under what pretence canst thou arrogate this honor to thyself? Thou pretendest to be the successor of Peter, to whom thou art no more like than was Nero, Domitian, or Caligula, unless, perhaps, thou wouldst take Heliogabalus for thy model, seeing that he united a new kind of priesthood with the imperial dignity. Certain it is, that all those princes were, so far as the name is concerned, high-priests. This was founded in the superstitious belief of the age; and thou now, in these times, and among a Christian people, darest to assume the same title, against all right, and in opposition to the unchangeable will of Christ, and the doctrines of the holy fathers. Canst thou be a representative of Christ, thou whose ideas and designs are ever tending to set Christ at naught?—thou, to whom only the empty name belongs, and which thou misusest as a cloak for thy debauchery? Canst thou be the representative of Christ,—thou in whom every child can recognize antichrist? What kind of a Christ dost thou set before us, if thou wouldst have us behold his image in thy tyranny? We see that thou art the priest of all ungodliness; the standard-bearer of Satan; the savage tyrant of souls; an inhuman executioner; and to judge by thy life, thou art a monster, framed as it were of all kinds of wickednesses; the destroyer, in fact, whom Paul describes to us. And yet in thee we are to look for the vicar of Christ! No: rather let us regard thee as a wolf, engaged in worrying the sheep of Christ; a robber who scatters the flocks; a wretch who devours them!"

And further:—"He calls himself father! This he does as the poets describe Saturn, who devoured his children. Moreover, he strikes out of the number of God's children all those who will not obey his mandates. But it matters not. The lightnings with which he threatens us are not God's, but the demon's; and the protestants are prepared to prove, by the clearest evidence, that he is antichrist. If they cannot do this, they are not only willing to be accounted liars, but to acknowledge themselves worthy of every species of punishment. All they desire is, to be allowed a fair hearing before a proper tribunal; to have the matter determined according to the word of God; and that due reverence should be shown for the statements of the ancient fathers. But what does the holy father say to this request? He will suffer it under certain conditions; just as if a malefactor, charged with robbery and murder, should offer to be judged on condition, that a tribunal should be raised

upon which he himself might sit to conduct his own trial; that nothing should be advanced contrary to his will, that no evidence should be brought against him, and that, in short, everything should be so ordered as to render his acquittal certain.

"How then could the reformation be accomplished, when the final appeal must always be to the court of Rome, which would confound heaven and earth together? Were it not also a sort of horrible thing to cut and carve for him who is a god upon earth? To prescribe to him rules of living? To limit his feasting, and demand a yearly account of his expenses? And not only this, but to cut off from his own life that which he has taken from others by treachery and an unrighteous use of power; and to deprive him of that which he has usurped from the empire and still retains, so that wherever he looks he can only behold what he has stolen?

"Let him ask himself whether the pope has a right to condemn the protestants? He will answer, that the question is not one of law, but of custom. This may do very well at Rome, but it will not do in Germany, where truth is held and right is respected. There, it is a new thing to have nothing secure but what may be useful to this or that individual. And if it be contrary to received principles in Germany, not to fulfil that which has been promised, or capriciously to recall a promise, how badly must such things agree with the character of the emperor!

"Suppose then that this were the determination, that all which the emperor has promised to the protestants is null and void. But while now there is nothing holier among men than a word solemnly pledged, the principle has long been established that it is not necessary to keep faith and truth with heretics. What then becomes of the oath? Why, the papists consider that they have a right to absolve from perjury as often as it is convenient to commit it. But it is still the eternal law of the empire to keep truth. How? Is not the pope above the law? What has he to do with laws? It is not consistent with the majesty of the emperor to reverse a decree which he has himself passed. But all infamy is covered by the holiness of the pope. Let this suffice. But have we not briefs and seals also? As if the absolution given by the pope were not enough to cancel all proofs, according to ancient precedent."

After an allusion to the history of Huss and the emperor

Sigismund, Calvin continues, "But the emperor Charles is a man who will not be led to make a sacrifice of his calling and his honor to the pope. It is well known how often this Satan has persuaded him to be fierce and cruel. But it is equally well known that he has always firmly kept his word. It is one of his noblest and most heroic virtues, and one to be admired before all others, that in these troublous times nothing has ever been able to induce him to violate his promise, or to sacrifice his goodness and moderation."

Connected with this writing against the pope is the excellent address which he sent, at the same time, to the emperor himself at Speier,\* and of which Beza speaks in this forcible manner: "I doubt whether any weightier or more nervous composition of this kind has been produced in our age." It appeared under the following title, "A Supplicatory Remonstrance in reference to a General Council, addressed to the emperor, the princes, and the other orders assembled at Speier, in the name of all those who love the kingdom of Christ."

Who will fail here to recollect Luther's address "To the emperor's majesty, and the Christian nobles of the German nation, on the reformation of religion," in which he attacks the triple defence of the papacy? "The Romanists," he says, "have dexterously surrounded themselves with three walls, so as to defy any effort to reform them. Thus, in the first place, if the temporal power assail them, they assert that the temporal power has no right over them; then, if the holy Scriptures be brought against them, they answer, that no one has a right to interpret Scripture except the pope; and thirdly, when threatened with a council, they reply, that it belongs to the pope only to assemble such a meeting. Now God help us, and give us a trumpet to throw down these straw and paper walls of Jericho."

Calvin's object was to reconcile the emperor to the design of the reformation. He therefore briefly set forth in his work:—

1. What the abuses were which rendered interference necessary;
2. That the means of correction employed by the Evangelical party were actually the best; and in the last place, but prin-

\* *Supplex exhortatio ad invictissimum Cæsarem Carolum Quintum et illustrissimos principes aliosque ordines Spiræ nunc Imperii conventum agentes, ut restituendæ ecclesiæ curam serio velint suscipere* (De necessitate reformandæ ecclesiæ, 1544). Bucer had persuaded Calvin to write this work; and in a letter to Farel, dated March 25, 1544, Calvin says that Bucer praised it *sine exceptione*.

cipally, why there was no longer any time for delay, the progress of the evil rendering a counter-operation immediately necessary.

Having again shown the nothingness of the papacy with all its principles and erroneous doctrines, he proceeds at once to express his desire for a provincial synod, in opposition to the catholic council of Trent. "The pope wishes for no council. A general council is a mere deception. Such a thing is impossible; but a provincial synod in Germany is possible,—such a synod, that is, as it was the custom to hold in the ancient church." He then represents to the emperor, in a pathetic manner, the danger to which the church in Germany must be exposed, unless such an assembly were convened. "And Germany," he adds, "will have to answer for it before God, if nothing be done. 'But how can a province,' it may be asked, 'undertake this?' As if provincial synods were not held before general councils were assembled! Up to the present time, no one, Sire, has been able to induce you to act against us. Though the sword has been thrust, so to speak, into your hand, you have remained calm and unmoved. A heretic, says Augustine, should be instructed and treated with moderation. How much more ought we to be treated mildly; we who desire nothing else but to unite in the profession of the pure faith! And you, Sire, and you, renowned princes, know well enough that the pope wishes for nothing so much as to fill Germany with blood and murder."

That which he says in reference to the unity of the church is especially deserving of notice in the present times. "The principle out of which Paul deduces the unity of the church (Ephes. iv. 5) is, that there is only one God, one baptism, one faith. We have all one Father, and are called to one hope. Therefore, according to what is here said, we shall be one body and one spirit, if we believe in the same God, and are united together in the bond of faith. But we must keep constantly in mind that faith comes from the Word of God. This therefore is certain, that there is a holy unity among us, if, agreeing in the pure doctrine, we are all one body in Christ. And indeed, if it only amounted to this, that we agree in doctrine, what sign should we have whereby to distinguish the true church of God from the wretched sects of unbelievers? To this the apostle answers, that Jesus Christ has ordained the preaching of the Gospel for the edifying of the church, till we all come to the unity of the faith; that is, to the knowledge of the Son of God."



Could he more openly recognize the unity of the church as a portion of true doctrine than by thus referring us back to Jesus Christ? "The same apostle establishes this principle when he prays God to unite the Romans in concord with each other, and according to the meaning of Christ, that they might with one heart honor God. The protestants consequently have not forsaken unity, but their opponents have done so, because they have banished Christ from the midst of them."

This unity, which is only grounded on faith in Christ, and disregards the unimportant matters of belief, was firmly upheld by the protestant controversialists in their subsequent disputes with the catholics, among others with Bossuet, and especially by Jurieu in his *Système de l'Unité*. This author grounds the unity of the protestant church on its agreement in fundamental points; and to this view Calvin felt himself at all times obliged to revert. "Would that your majesty would listen to the holy Cyprian speaking on the true unity of the church!"

Having established the principles of this unity on the episcopacy of one, that is, Jesus Christ, he adds, "There is consequently only one church, which lies extended far and wide. As there are many rays of the sun, but only one brightness, one light; and many branches on one tree, and yet only one stem, springing from one root; and as from one fountain flow many brooks, so also the church, illuminated by the light of one God, spread through all the world, is yet but one light." Hence he concludes that all heresies and schisms arise from this, that men neglect to look to the ground of truth, or to seek the head, the doctrine of the heavenly Master.

"The general agitation of the German empire is not far distant; we see how God stands with the sword in his hand ready to strike us. Every one thinks of the war with the Turks, and no one can think of it without trembling. The cause however of the war which the Turks wage against us is in ourselves—is hidden in the innermost depths of our own being. If we would have God help us, let us first root out the cause of these calamities from our hearts. As we feel assured that we only desire the interests of God's kingdom, so are we also confident that He will never be wanting to Himself, or to his works. We have the Holy Spirit as a true and certain witness of our doctrine: we know that we preach eternal truth. If the ingratitude or stiff-neckedness of those whom we would help, be such

as to bring about the destruction of the whole building of God, then will I here say what it becomes a Christian to declare. We shall die; but in dying we shall be conquerors, not only because death will afford us an entrance into a better world, but because our blood will be as seed to diffuse far around this truth of God, which the world now seeks to destroy."

The progress of the German reformation shows how impossible it was for the emperor to obtain his object of pacifying the church, when, forgetting at length his prudent moderation, he espoused the interests of the pope, and endeavored to suppress by force the great spiritual movement, but could not hinder the triumph of truth. At this time (1543), Calvin, devoted to his high calling, held it as his duty to attack, with a strong hand, that fundamental error of the world, Pelagianism; and in the contest thence arising, the opposition of the adversaries to the pure doctrine of the Gospel becomes more and more apparent. A certain writer named Pighius, of Kempen, assailed Calvin with extraordinary violence, and thereby led the production of an eloquent and well-reasoned work by the latter. This writing, with that on the Decrees of the Council of Trent, of which we shall shortly speak, affords a clearer view of his opposition to the main errors of the catholic church.

Whilst the Sorbonne was defending the catholic faith in general, Pighius was employed in upholding it in its elements. His controversy was a continuation of that between Erasmus and Luther; a renewal of the old struggle of the Pelagians with Augustine on the wonderful mystery of the freedom of the human will. Luther's grand argument for the truth had not exhausted the subject: his hyperbolical expressions had rather given occasion to offence. That ancient sin of the self-righteous world, which will hear nothing of grace, but will depend upon itself for salvation;—that doctrine of infidelity, which deprives God of the honor and places man in his stead; which pretends that the human will is free to choose good, and denies the fall and the misery of man;—this fundamental error of pride and disbelief, was Calvin, by applying his system to its utmost extent, to overthrow and crush. But this error was concentrated in the Roman church; it had become identified with it. Protestantism therefore was to place in the clearest light, for the glory of God, the opposing truth. In our times, when anti-christ has, alas! been making further progress, the reformers

would have had not only to contend for the glory of God, but for his personal existence.

Pighius, with his natural view of the freedom of man, is a representative of the rationalism of all times; and Calvin, by his development of the fundamental idea of Christianity, and his effort to establish it, prepared already, as a representative of orthodoxy, the future victory of the synod of Dort. When such grand thoughts as those uttered by Calvin have been once expressed with clearness, and made themselves felt in practical life, the human spirit can no longer remain stationary.

To lessen in some degree the violence of the controversy, a middle way had been proposed in the fifth century; this was called semi-Pelagianism. According to this system, death is the consequence of Adam's sin: men are saved by grace, through the death of Jesus and baptism; but a will to good and to faith is expected on their side. Man has attained the ability to believe.

This doctrine found admission into the church during the reign of scholasticism; but Luther restored the pure Augustine system, and defended it with invincible force. Calvin, in his work, supported the views of the German theologians, and addressing Pighius says, "You must not wonder that the doctrine of these men prevails so widely. It is not Luther who has spoken: God has sent forth his lightnings by his mouth."

The reformers altogether agreed with each other in this doctrine, and the Augsburg confession and the Apology speak the same language as Calvin. In the second article of the Confession it is said, "And further it is taught, that after the fall of Adam, all men, as naturally born, are conceived and born in sin; that is, that all from their mother's womb are full of evil desires and inclinations, and can naturally have no fear of God, no love of God, no faith in God; and further, this inborn corruption and original sin are actual sin, and condemn all those who inherit it to God's eternal wrath, unless they be born again through baptism and the Holy Ghost. Here the Pelagians and others, who regard original sin as not sin, and who endeavor to make nature appear holy and efficacious, and thereby lessen the merits of Christ and his sufferings, are utterly rejected."

Augustine's strong representation of the subject stands directly opposed to the endeavor of the Romish church to appropriate to itself, and to connect with its institutions, the power

of salvation. Thus it exhibits, not the pure doctrine of the sufficiency of Christ's death, but teaches that his death availed only for the remission of original sin, and that other sins must be atoned for by good works. Here their treasure of good works comes to their help, and the opinion of those is readily adopted, who, while they assert that the cause of sin may be found in the perverted will of man, yet admit the notion that it is merely a strange, an imputed guilt which adheres to man from the sin of Adam; that nature, as soon as it can be freed from this guilt, will attain to its perfect integrity as before the fall; and that man may consequently acquire blessedness through his own power and deserts. This restoration of nature was called justification, the nature of man being rendered righteous through the removal of the inherited guilt.

Hence the reformers were called upon to show, that original sin is not merely lust, but an actual inability to attain to righteousness without the help and grace of God. Melanethon has very clearly contrasted these doctrines, and both in the Latin and German copies of the Confession calls original sin a disease. The Roman theologians, on the contrary, teach that this guilt, which is foreign to man, is taken away by baptism, and hence the vast importance of that sacrament in their eyes. Thus too their anger, when, at the beginning, Luther asserted that original sin remains after baptism. Leo X. wholly and distinctly condemned this dogma, as altogether opposed to the sacred order of the church. But that which was most objectionable in Luther, he represented as nothing worth all pretensions to individual desert, and wholly set aside the sufficiency of the law, the idea of perfection, and of supererogatory merits existing in some few men to be applied to the aid of sinners. With its semi-Pelagianism, the corner-stone of its theology, the Romish church must itself fall. Closely connected with the fundamental question of original sin is that which refers to grace and free-will. According to the Evangelical view of the subject, grace only can loose the will in bondage through sin; and conversion, therefore, must depend upon the election of God. We shall consider the first question in our notice of the work against the Tridentine Decrees; and the second in our present examination of the treatise of Pighius.

Erasmus had treated the question of the natural freedom of man to good. Luther's answer is well-known.\* Calvin's prin-

\* See Basnage, *Hist. des Eglises R. t. ii. pp. 262-272.*



ciples on freedom and predestination agree with those of Luther. He asserts that men fall through their own guilt, and that God can, without any injustice on his part, allow them to perish; that the first man destroyed himself by his own free-will, through preferring the slavery of Satan to the kingdom of God; that the divine decrees however were not the cause of sin, but the will of man. "Why do you ascend to heaven, to look there for the cause of your sin, whereas it is in yourselves? Let men harden and blind themselves as they please, they can never lose the feeling of their inward corruption, and their conscience will condemn them, whatever impiety, error and sensuality may do to make men appear holy in their own eyes."

Pighius is only worthy of notice because he suffered himself to be convinced, by the reading of Calvin's work, of the truth of his views. Calvin characterized him as a hungry hound, who avenged himself by barking because he could not bite, and described him under the name of Plagiarius.\*

The tendency also which Calvin exhibited to unite himself with Melancthon, and thereby establish conformity of doctrine, is deserving observation. He dedicated his work to him, and the value which Melancthon assigned to this mark of respect is shown in his letter of thanks. Calvin complained that Pighius had raged against the fundamental truths of the reformed church in ten books. "If I had not answered him," he says, "the honor of Christ would have been trodden under foot, and I should have been a traitor to the interests of the Saviour. So many things take place daily, both from within and without, that I am almost pressed down. We have scarcely time for reflection, and my spirit is driven to and fro. But our opponents have ample leisure, and after an overthrow they betake themselves quietly to repose, and meditate a fresh attack. Our friends, moreover, are so far apart, that we cannot advise with each other. But let us look at the Israelites, when they held the sword with one hand, and built the temple with the other. We are few in number, and how could we resist, were it not in this manner that God is pleased to make his power more mani-

\* Albert Pighius was born at Campen in Ober-Yssel; he studied at Louvain and Cologne, and acquired reputation for his knowledge of mathematics and theology. Pope Hadrian VI., his former instructor, Clemens VII., and Paul III. had a high opinion of him. He was a violent opponent of Luther and the other reformers. He was archdeacon of St. John's church at Utrecht, and by reading Calvin's writings, in order to refute them, became a Calvinist.—Senebier, art. Calvin, p. 238; Basnage, t. ii. p. 610.

fest? The issue will assuredly be prosperous; we are as certain of this as if we saw the end, fighting as we do under his standard. And if we be blamed by some, let it suffice us, that God our judge, and Christ our Lord and captain, with his holy angels, are for us. Let this be the joy and support of our conscience. For myself, I know whom I serve; and I stand fast in this, that the service which I render Him, being dutifully performed, is acceptable in his sight. If man's judgment be considered, then your own has more weight with me than that of all other men put together."

In the introduction, Calvin remarks how willingly he would have remained silent, if his opponent had not stated that he would confute him and his Institutions, in order to overthrow both Luther and all the rest through him,—he, that is Calvin, having argued the whole subject with the greatest care. "Although the army of God numbers many soldiers better armed and more skilful than I am, yet, being especially challenged, I will enter the arena, supported by the strength and with the spiritual weapons of my heavenly King and leader, to chastise the insolence of this haughty Goliath." The work itself\* is characterized by clearness and moderation, but not by any powerful logical deductions. It is easy to see that he felt the difficulties attending his doctrine.

In the first book, Calvin confutes the notion of a free will, and defends Luther, among others, against the accusation of denying good works. "He has not spoken of them to deprive them of all worth in the sight of God, nor has he ever denied that God will reward them. He has only desired to show what they are if viewed according to their actual value, and not according to the mercy of God. But you will say, that in Luther's mode of expressing himself, the whole subject sounds hyperbolical: although I am ready to allow this, yet I contend that he had good reasons for using this strong kind of language. He saw the world so deep-sunk in mortal slumber, through its false and dangerous confidence in the holiness of works, that he despaired of awakening it by words,—by his voice; the sound of the trumpet only could arouse it. Thunder and lightning seemed necessary to him."

Calvin comes at last to the conclusion, that, as there is some-

\* It appeared under the title, "*J. Calvini Defensio Sacrae et Orthodoxae Doctrinae de Servitute et Liberatione Humani Arbitrii adversus Calumnias Alb. Pighii.*" Gen. 1543.

what sinful, even in every good work, they must all be viewed in the light of sins, if judged strictly according to their worth, and not according to the grace of God. "We have changed nothing in this doctrine. It is true, that much which Luther wrote in a scholastic and unpopular style has been thoughtfully and skilfully presented in a milder form by Melancthon, to make it more acceptable to the ordinary understandings of men. But with regard to Luther himself, we entertain no doubt that he ought to be considered as an altogether extraordinary apostle of the Lord, through whose labor and office at this time the Gospel has been admirably set forth in its purity; and as for myself, I will readily admit, as it is related Solon was accustomed to say of himself, that as I daily become older, so I daily learn."

On other accusations which Pighius brought against Luther, Calvin finely remarks:—"His most angry complaints tend to this, that Luther was a monster of Tartarus, because he was often subjected, through mighty struggles of conscience, to the pains and terrors of hell. But if this babbler had only been able to understand, even as in a dream, what this signifies, and what is the worth of such struggles, he would be astounded, or be lost in the admiration and praise of Luther. It is the common lot of the pious to suffer the severest anguish of conscience. Thus taught, they become imbued with true humility and the fear of God. Every one, according as he is distinguished for excellency of spirit, is tried in this mysterious and unwonted manner, so that he can say, that he has not only been encompassed by the snares of death, but by hell itself. Hence the most excellent of the saints form, as it were, a theatre selected for the wonderful exercise of God's righteous judgments. This is the wrestling of Jacob, in which he contended with God. To comprehend the violence of the struggle, let us consider the power of God, and that he who engages in it hangs his whole life upon the issue. But this is said to the faithful only."\*

In the second book, the arguments of the opponent in favor of free-will are answered.

"He objects to us, in the first place, that if we can do neither good nor evil, and everything happens by necessity through the power of God, there can be no reason why we should not cease from acting at all. I answer with Solomon,† 'A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps.' To his second argument, 'Why should offences be punished by the law,

\* Ed. Amst. t. viii. pp. 119, 121.

† Prov. xvi. 9.

if they happen of necessity? How can the judge condemn him through whom God has performed his work? If a murder has been committed, do we not immediately snatch the sword of vengeance? But according to Luther's doctrine, the wicked in God's hand are nothing more than the sword in the hand of man;—I answer: the resolution of this difficulty may be found in the consideration, that men ought to view God's government of the world, not with impious arrogance, but with devout humility. Moreover, we have not said, that the wicked sin with such a necessity that they do not act with wilful and considerate wickedness. Necessity consists in this, that God completes his designs thereby: this is fixed and unalterable. But at the same time, because the intention and the will to do evil are in them, the wicked are guilty of the sin committed. Some one may here say, that God urges and leads them to this. Yes, we answer, but so that herein God acts on the one side, and they on the other. They pursue their own wicked desire, while God so employs their wickedness that He attains his righteous end. The holy Scripture says, 'Assur is the rod of his anger;' and how could the axe be proud which is lifted by the hand of God?

"When our opponent therefore argues, in the third place, that this doctrine banishes all order and morality from human life; that rewards are in vain promised to virtue, or punishments denounced against vice, if that which takes place happens by necessity; we answer, God employs subordinate means and instruments. The world is governed by law, but according to the order which God has proposed to himself for the upholding of the world. We are no stoics, forming to ourselves the notion of a fate from the eternal connection of things. All we say is, that God has not merely events in his power, but also the hearts of men; and that He so conducts all things, that nothing finally can happen, let men do what they will, which He has not before ordained. Further; what seems chance, we call necessity; not through a natural necessity, but because God rules all things by his eternal counsels.

"In regard to the fourth argument, that men are changed by this doctrine into mere animals, nay, into monsters; we answer, that men cannot simply do nothing good, but that they cannot even think what is good: but they must altogether despair of their own power, and cast themselves into the arms of God. There is an innate corruption in man, arising from ori-



ginal sin, so that he can trace his guilt to no other source, the root of the evil thus existing in himself. Still there is no creature, willing or unwilling, not subject to the will of God. Consequently, whatever happens, happens necessarily. Satan himself, and all wicked beings, are subject to the will of God, so that they cannot move themselves unless by his command. His hand restrains them as a bridle. But our doctrine has no other aim than this, that the believer in Christ may rest secure in the omnipotence of God, and may feel no dread of either chance or ill-luck; of either man or beast, nor of the devil himself. Though the reins which held them back may be broken or loosened, and all be left free to obey the impulse of their blind rage, he will only the rather commit both soul and body to God, and so remain in peace under his protection.

“The tenor of the fifth objection is, that we make God the author of all evil; that is, the most cruel of beings out of the most righteous, and folly itself out of infinite wisdom. Now I do not deny that the natural man might publish such a foolishness to the world. What an absurdity however would it not be to judge the incomprehensible decrees of God,—those which Paul adored with fear and trembling,—because he could not understand them according to weak, human reason! We would therefore avoid this carnal, dangerous rashness, and exercise a chaste forbearance and reverence in respect to the divine righteousness. We shall then see that God is not the author of evil, though it be said that He urges the wicked to commit it as He will, and that He executes and perfects his work by their means; but we shall rather confess that He is a most wonderful and glorious Creator, who accomplishes good even through evil instruments, and employs unrighteousness for purposes of good.

“In answer to the sixth argument, that we pervert or blaspheme universal nature, because we despise all that which man derives from nature, we remark; this is nothing new to find the enemies of the grace of God hiding themselves under a pretended love of nature. Augustine shows this. That it may not be supposed however that I thus speak in order to avoid a difficulty, I am ready plainly to declare, that Luther, and all of us, admit a twofold nature:—an original one, as created by God, pure and glorious; and another, which, corrupted by the fall, has lost its inward excellence. The guilt of this corruption we ascribe to man, not to God. If Pighius object to this doctrine,

he must attribute the error to the apostle, who states it in very definite terms; or if he prefer it, we will answer him from the mouth of Augustine.

"The following will show all the difficult points of the argument. Our opponent explains the meaning of the word *arbitrium* or *will*. The power of freedom is with him the ability to choose. It is therefore to be called free-will, because the will is master of itself, and pertains to itself; that is, it has the power to do what it does, not necessarily, but so that it may leave it undone. With regard to the word, however, I repeat here what I have said in my Institutes, that I have no such superstitious dependence upon terms as to contend about them, supposing that the knowledge of the doctrine to which they refer be preserved safe and uncorrupted. If force be opposed to freedom, I acknowledge, and will always affirm, that there is a free will, a will determining itself, and proclaim every one who thinks otherwise a heretic. Let the will be called free in this sense, that is, because it is not constrained or impelled irresistibly from without, but determines itself by itself, and I will no longer dispute. But I am mistrustful, because, when this epithet is used in reference to the will, it is commonly understood in an altogether different sense. If men, for example, refer it to their own powers, it cannot fail but that they will imagine that man has the power of good and evil in himself, and that he can therefore choose the one or the other by his own might. It is not without use therefore that I strive about the term. I view it rather as the defence of a righteous cause, if I endeavor to abolish the use of this little word, at which the greater part of the world stumble with so much danger, and which we cannot find to agree with the sense of Scripture. Freedom and bondage, compulsion (*servitudo*), are ideas opposed to each other, so that if the one be adopted, the other is rejected. If now the will of man be bound, *serva voluntas*, it cannot correctly be called free. Let us hear what the Holy Spirit says on the subject. One sentence will suffice, the question here concerning not the thing itself, but the terms. When Paul describes the state of the saints, he says, that they are in captivity to the law of sin, unless freed by the Holy Ghost. And when he speaks of the nature of man, he says that man is sold under sin.\* But if the saints be slaves, so far as they are left to themselves and to their own nature, what shall we say of those in whom nature alone lives and rules? If,

\* Rom. vii. 14-23.

after regeneration, freedom is only half-acquired, what can there be but slavery and bondage in the first natural birth? Thus Paul says, 'but God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin,' &c. He makes not merely the carnal nature, but the whole man, the slave of sin before the new birth. Whoever therefore says that the will is free, employs a different expression to that used by the Holy Ghost. I could readily allow the learned to avail themselves of this term, if they adhered strictly to one sense of the word: nor would I forbid their so speaking even to the people, if the subject were properly defined. But if this cannot be done, I admonish readers to look more to the sense than to the words of what they study. As Pighius proceeds cunningly to work, and always confounds the notion of *necessity* with *compulsion*, *coactionem cum necessitate*; and as in this discussion very much depends upon preserving the distinction between these terms, so it is very necessary to determine the four following points:—1. Whether the will be free (*libera voluntas*). 2. Whether its freedom be lost (*serva voluntas*). 3. Whether it follow its inner impulse (*spontanea voluntas*). 4. Whether it be subject to compulsion (*coacta voluntas*).

"Free-will is commonly described as that which has the power of choosing good or evil. So Pighius also describes it. A compelled will there cannot be, these two notions being opposed to each other. But correct teaching requires us to define the bondage of the will. We call the will in such a state, that which is forcibly moved, not according to its own inner determination and choice, but by outward causes. A self-governing spontaneous will is one which is moved by itself, whatever direction it may take, and is never urged forward against its own determination. The servile will is that which, through the influence of corruption, is held in bondage to wicked passions, so that it can choose nothing but what is evil. According to this statement, we allow to man the possession of a free will, of a self-governing will, so that, when he fulfils what is wicked, it may be ascribed to him, and to his own free choice. We reject the idea of compulsion and force, because they are a contradiction to the proper nature of the will. But we deny that it is altogether free, because, through its innate corruption, it is necessarily impelled to evil, and can desire nothing but what is evil. Wherever there is service there is necessity, and the main question is, whether the service be free or compulsory. We assert however no other necessity for sin than that which exists in the corruption of the

will, whence it follows that it is in itself a self-determining will. And now you see that necessity and a free assent can agree together. This our opponent has endeavored to conceal, by allowing it to be supposed, that the freedom of man consists in this, that he may do good or evil, without any mention being made of necessity."

Calvin shows in the following books, especially in the third, how his own doctrine agrees with that of Origen, Tertullian, Jerome, and Augustine, and makes it evident to his opponent that he, on the contrary, is simply a Pelagian.

Melancthon thanked Calvin for the dedication of his work. The latter was then with Bucer, who had been invited to Cologne to reform the church there. In his letter he exhorted Calvin, younger than himself, as a new champion of the church, to come forth in those perilous times, for he felt himself old and weary of life. He spoke very mildly on the subject of election, and expressed it as his opinion that Calvin had conducted his cause with piety and eloquence (*non solum piè, sed etiam eloquenter*): "I should be thankful, as well for the expression of my gratitude as for the opportunity of stating my opinions fully, as we have been accustomed to do when together, to be able to speak with you. Although I do not pretend to so much talent and learning as you give me credit for, and we must especially confess our weakness in the church, yet I rejoice exceedingly at your kind feeling toward me, and give you hearty thanks for the proof which you have afforded of your friendship, in so high a place, that is, at the beginning of such a noble work.\*

"With regard to the question of predestination, I had a learned friend in Tübingen, Franciscus Stadianus, who was accustomed to say, that he considered both views right,—that everything happens as divine Providence has ordered it; and yet, that all things are contingent. He acknowledged, however, that he could not himself show their agreement with each other. If now I hold this position, that God is not the author of sin, nor can will it, admit it as an apology for the weakness of my judgment, that the unlearned comprehend how David was carried away by his own will. I am convinced that, as he had the Holy Spirit, he might have retained Him, and that in this struggle the will had its own peculiar exercise. Although this question might be much more subtly handled, yet it seems to me judicious to lead the minds of people to consider it in this

\* "Scripto luculento," Ep. 48, ed. Amst. p. 174.



manner. Let us accuse our own will when we fall. Let us not look for the cause in God, or rise in judgment against Him. Let us rather reflect that God will help us, and stand by us in the conflict. 'Do but will,' says Basil, 'and God will aid you.' Let us then praise the goodness of God without ceasing. He promises and secures us help: but He does this only to those who pray; that is, to such as depend on his promises; for with the Word of God must everything be begun, and nothing can resist his promise. Let us devote ourselves to Him, and not rebel: we shall then agree, the secret counsel of God being revealed to us. He himself assists him who seeks to promote unity, and works by his Word. I write this, but not to prescribe aught to you, the most learned of men, and the most acquainted of all others with religious controversies. I know also that what I say is in perfect agreement with your own ideas. But my meaning is palpable, and immediately adapted to common use."

Calvin enters more deeply into the consideration of the difference between the two churches, in his work against the council of Trent. A dialectic undertaking of this kind is not to be overlooked at a period when works, like that of Möhler, make so strong an impression on the public mind. The writer has treated of the separation of the two churches with a certain kind of freedom, and ascribes their division to the desire of both to support pure Christianity. He at the same time looks forward to their reconciliation, but still describes protestantism in such a manner that it must seem to have sprung from a strongly excited, one-sided feeling; from genuine Christian zeal indeed, but yet in every respect, especially in regard to justification, speaking rashly and passing inconsiderate judgments. Now, where much depends upon clearness of ideas, to bring about that happier epoch in which protestants and catholics must feel constrained mutually to acknowledge, that the phenomenon of their two churches rests upon an opposition in their history, which, after the clearing away of what is sinful, will resolve itself in a twofold blessing, and in the loftier extension of Christianity, as soon as the fitting time is come,—in all these respects Calvin's acuteness must be of great use to lead minds less clear and powerful than his own to concord and unity. His anger and irony belonged to his times, and instead of doing harm, rather served to add interest to his work.

The history of the synod is well known. The protestants had

solemnly declared at Speier, that they would send no representatives to Italy, nor recognize any council held beyond the limits of the German empire. It was on the 18th of January, 1546, that the first meeting of the council was opened at Mantua, and in the following it was determined to draw up a confession of faith. Without examining the grounds of the existing evils, the synod employed itself in defining points of faith for the whole church, or in merely sanctioning the decrees of the pope. As the evangelical church depends wholly upon the pure Gospel, it was at once determined, in opposition to the protestants, that the apocryphal books should be equally esteemed with the canonical; that traditions were as holy as the Word of God; that the Vulgate was of authority in controversies; and that those who opposed these dogmas were anathematized.

Thus the design of putting an end to the unhappy schism by a general council was wholly frustrated. The Tridentine synod was a mere instrument of papal policy, but not sufficient even for the purpose for which it was designed. Little concerned about the peace or freedom of the church, Rome sought only its own glory; the firmer establishment of its power and anti-christian principles. The Tridentine decrees were even in catholic countries received with limitations, and Henry II. formally protested against the council. Instead of subjecting the Evangelical party to his power by this measure, the pope made the breach wider; he drew the line of demarkation between them more distinctly; he established the opposition which it was so greatly the interest of the catholic church to remove, and which must now continue as long as the Romish element in that church prevails, and its political interests overpower the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Calvin was the first to oppose the council: he controverted the decrees of the first seven sessions: his remarks are as profound as they are learned. The catholics were very angry at his work, and Cochläus felt himself constrained to answer it. Calvin begins by showing that no such an assembly could have any binding authority. He quotes the sentiments of Augustine on the council of Nicæa, in his work against the Arian Maximus. That father said, that he would not avail himself of the authority of that great council, as if its decrees were laws: "Our dispute must be settled by an appeal to Scripture, which belongs exclusively neither to you nor me, but to us both."

Calvin shows still further, in the preface to his work, how

ridiculous it was for a council, at which scarcely forty bishops were present, though pretending to represent the whole church, to assume the character of an infallible assembly :—"If these worthy fathers," says he, "respect each other, must they not feel ashamed when considering at whose call they stood? The whole popedom must acknowledge that there was nothing but a vain show of bishops at Trent. I will not pretend to interfere with the honor of other nations, but being a Frenchman, I will ask my countrymen, what price they set upon their own honor? France is assuredly one of the most important provinces of the church, and yet only two French bishops have been present at the council, the one from Rennes, the other from Clermont, both equally weak and unlearned. The second was absolutely, but a short time since, a vagrant, a mad sort of hound, running after harlots, till he at last united himself to a certain famous dame at Paris, with as little sense as himself. These two bishops were not acquainted with the simplest elements of theology, and yet the fate of the whole church was to be left depending upon their nod. Now I will ask you, my fellow-countrymen, who among you would believe that such an assembly, however great it had been, could represent the Holy Spirit? There might be some monks there also, who were running after cardinals'-hats and lawn-sleeves, and who had bartered all their talk to the pope; but had they all been angels, the whole council would have been a mockery, its decrees being wholly dependent upon the dictation of the pontiff. He controlled, as it were, the Holy Spirit. As soon as a decree was ready, couriers hastened to Rome to see what their idol would determine concerning it. The most holy father then called his council together. The decree was examined, corrected; and the courier rode back as fast as he could. In the next session the secretary read the decree already determined upon, and the asses dropped their ears in token of assent.

"And this now is the oracular response which is to bind the whole world. Who then, however little his wisdom, will feel angry with me, because, supported by the Word of God, I assail such a council, and unmask an ape, though concealing himself in a purple robe, that he may appear an ape as he is? I have already proved sufficiently that these Neptunian fathers, with their Trident, are not so terrible, but that one may chastise them without fear by the Word of God; nor so holy, that it should be altogether unlawful to disturb them. The Roman

Pontifex has assumed a mask, but it can deceive no man who has eyes."

After having thus shown his contempt for the synod, at the outset, he proceeds to examine the proceedings of each session separately, and so employs the force of his logic, of his learning and triumphant intellectual vigor, that the reader feels himself sharing in the glory of the victory. Calvin's courage is so much the more to be admired, because, while the grand assembly at Trent was protected and patronized by the pope and the victorious emperor, the protestant churches were in a state of the greatest peril. It may be affirmed with truth, that Calvin, at this important period of his life, exercised the noblest energies of his mind, not only in reference to his own immediate circle, but in respect to the church at large. Thus he strengthened the hearts of the reformed, and it is easy to understand how the cause must succeed to which he thus devoted the whole power of his mind.

It is difficult to select passages for extract out of this work. The wit and force by which it is characterized are equally diffused through the whole, and every chapter of it is important to the theologian. Calvin first censures the speeches of the legates. The language in which the decrees are couched is so unctuous, that the simple Christian, not seeing behind the curtain, might be easily deceived thereby. The fourth session, which treated of the Scriptures, and the sixth, which discussed the doctrine of justification, furnish the main points of the work, the subjects here referred to forming the whole foundation of the catholic system.

The following is extracted from the remarks on the fourth session:—"The old proverb says, 'The Roman church conquers all by sitting.'\* Securely trusting in this, these wretched bastards of the Romish court, that is, these children of the great whore, in proclaiming this fourth session, promised themselves a certain victory. What then hinders them now from raising a trophy, or from securing the fulfilment of all their wishes, if that be allowed them which is embraced in the present decree? There are here four principal points:—in the first place, they affirm that the members of the Christian church are not to abide by Scripture only, but must also follow tradition. Secondly, they insert in the catalogue of sacred Scriptures all the apocryphal books, and forbid their exclusion from the list. Thirdly,

\* *Romani sedendo vincunt.*



after having rejected all other translations of the Bible, of whatever kind they may be, they retain the Vulgate alone, and command that this should be regarded as authentic. And fourthly, they claim for themselves the exclusive right of interpreting all doubtful points or obscure passages, and that without appeal.

"Now, if these four points be yielded, every one will admit that the contest is at an end. Should the dispute be continued, it must be more for the sake of display than because it is necessary. All which they deduce, if it cannot be referred to holy Scripture, will find its place among the traditions, which, according to them, are as deserving of belief as the law and the prophets. What can we say to them now, when they thus defend every gross and anile imagination? There is no superstition, however monstrous, before which they are not ready to cast this shield of Ajax."

Calvin next shows that the Romanists employed Scripture merely as a mask to protect their opinions; that the admission of the apocryphal books into the canon was contrary to the rule of the primitive church; and that it was as absurd to reject all translations except the Vulgate, as it would be to despise the study of the original languages. He quotes a number of passages for the amusement of the reader. "They are not ashamed," he says, "to stamp the Vulgate of the New Testament with the seal of authenticity, when the writings of Valla, of Faber, of Erasmus, are in everybody's hand, and enable even children to detect the numerous errors of that translation."

"I come now to consider the right of exposition, which they arrogate to themselves whenever a doubt arises. Since the church enjoys a peculiar prerogative, available for the common good,—and since, as I am ready to allow, the Scriptures were not written according to private desire, so it would not be consistent with their dignity that they should be understood according to private notions. If therefore doubts arise on any difficult passage, the best course that can be taken to determine the true sense, is to assemble learned, God-fearing men, and let them consider the subject. But this is not the present question. They wish, by their tyrannical decree, utterly to destroy the freedom of the church, while they claim for themselves an unconditional and capricious authority. Whatever meaning they have given to Scripture, that we must, of necessity, admit. It is not to be permitted for any one, without their leave, to prove aught from Scripture. And would to God they were mighty

enough to undertake so great a work ! But they wish to put the saddle of a horse on the back of an ox, or rather to make an ass play the harp. Their real design is to make people venerate the Bible in holy darkness ; to protect it, like the mysteries of Diana, from the attempts of any one to understand it.

“We should never have done were I to bring examples, in every instance, to show what nets have been woven by means of this decree, to impose upon us a most unjust and intolerable slavery. This therefore must suffice. About 800 years after the birth of Christ, a synod was held at Nicæa to restore the worship of images, which had been prohibited in the reign of the emperor Leo. The papists regard this, because ever favorable to superstition, as right and holy. According moreover to their infallible principle, they cannot err in their interpretation of Scripture. But if such interpreters are to enjoy an authority of this kind, which it would be horrible to contemplate, the religion of Egypt will take the place of the Gospel, and we shall be reduced, in time, to the worship of serpents, of storks, cats and onions. But that it may appear to be agreeable to Scripture that churches should be adorned with paintings and statues, the following passages are adduced :—‘God created man after his own image.’ ‘Joshua erected twelve stones.’ ‘No man lights a candle and places it under a bushel :’ whence it is concluded that images ought to be set upon the altar. So also, ‘Let the light of thy countenance, O Lord, shine upon us !’ And, ‘As we have heard, so have we also seen.’ ‘Lord, I have loved the beauty of thine house.’ ‘Show me thy countenance, for it is fair.’

“To support the worship of images, they defend the superstition with the following quotations :—‘Abraham worshipped the people of the land.’ ‘Jacob erected a memorial and blessed it.’ ‘He worshipped the top of the staff of his son Joseph :’ that is, he bowed before the staff of Joseph to signify reverence. So also : ‘The rich of the people shall supplicate before thy face.’ ‘Worship his footstool.’ ‘God is admired in all his saints.’ And that their rashness may be carried to the highest point, they quote from another psalm, ‘The saints which are upon the earth,’ and refer this to pictures. I know that that which I am saying must seem almost incredible. I am even myself astounded as I read it, although my ears have been long hardened by their perversions.

“The main object of the Tridentine spirit, as seen in their

decree, is this, to make Scripture nothing for us but what the monks dream. And what do they understand by the church? The bishops who assemble under the banner of antichrist. What sort of interpretation will they bring? The greater number of them are ignorant even of grammar; nor will they venture to deny that I speak the truth when I say, that there is scarcely one in a hundred of them who has read a whole prophetic book, an apostolic epistle, or a gospel. Their minds are occupied with cares of too opposite a nature to allow of their troubling themselves about Scripture. It only remains therefore for them to resign this privilege to the apostolic chair; then to let the sacred mouth of Paul Farnese be appealed to for interpretations, or to show us another church worthy of undertaking this important duty; for all their extravagant praises of Rome will never convince us that the *rock* Cephas is the head, and that a chaste and holy marriage is accursed of God as something carnal, according to the well-known Romish expressions. They exclaim that the church would be ruined, if this exclusive right of interpreting Scripture should be taken from them, and so the door be left open to every frivolous spirit to corrupt the sense. And further, they are accustomed to object it to us as a crime, and so to expose us to hatred, that we wish to arrogate to ourselves the right of interpreting, and to submit to no restraint. Prudence forbids my expressing myself on this subject as the matter would seem to justify. It is true, however, that through our inquiries into the sense of holy Scripture, we have diffused more light than all the doctors, from the beginning of the papacy to the present time. They themselves cannot deny us this praise, and yet there is not one among us who would not willingly yield his opinion to the judgment of the church. We are far therefore from despising or undervaluing the authority of the church, or from giving the reins to the fantastic, and allowing them to indulge their vagaries unproved. Would to God that they could show us the church as it is depicted in Scripture; we should then soon agree to give it all the honor which they require! But since they invent a false church, and live on the plunder of the true, leaving it to its nakedness, we cannot do otherwise than rise against them."

It still remains for us to speak of Calvin's confutation of the doctrine of original sin, that fundamental error of the catholic church as established at Trent. The fathers of the council expended vast pains in their endeavor to arrive at an agreement

on this point. In the end, they expressed themselves as indefinitely as possible on the subject, so that their precise meaning can only be discovered by the condemnation of their opponents. Both our internal experience and the Scriptures show, that sin is inherited, and that it exists in every individual. This innate corruption therefore was called original sin, as distinguished from daily actual sin. The Augustine doctrine had long been modified by the church. It was taught, as above remarked, that all men are guilty in the sight of God through the sin of the first man, but that original sin is a foreign guilt, and not the proper corruption of our nature. As soon therefore as this foreign sin is taken away, man recovers his righteousness. Lust indeed remains, but not in its sinfulness, except as an element in the struggle for the crown of eternal life. Since man now sins through his own wickedness, he must either bear the punishment of his sins or make satisfaction for them, Christ having atoned only for original sin. Satisfaction consists in this, that we take upon ourselves some portion of the divine punishment, in such a way, that it is imputed to us as if we had suffered our own proper amount of chastisement; and the church alone has the power of imparting of the superabundant merits of Christ, and of delivering the soul from purgatory and hell; whence there is no salvation beyond the pale of the church.

After this statement, it will be easier for the reader to understand the character of that concealed pelagianism of the decree, from which Calvin tore the mask.

Thus he said to the Tridentines:—"You declare yourselves at the outset against the Pelagians in four articles, but these refer to points about which, in the present day, there is no dispute. There is something wicked in this, for it is to make it supposed that pains are being taken to allay a controversy belonging to our own times. What end, I ask, can you have, while hurling about your lightnings, but that of making the ignorant believe that there is something still behind? In the fifth article, however, where you at length expose your wares, you speak again in your proper tone, bring forth the follies of your sophists, and insolently defend them. 'Cursed be he,' you say, 'who denies that baptism takes away actual sin, but believes that it is only rubbed off, as it were, or not imputed.' You use this expression rubbed, or scraped, out, very cunningly; because you well know that it is greatly disliked, and that it was in this way that the Pelagians assailed Augustine. But let them take their



course. We teach, that all the guilt of sin is actually taken away by baptism, so that that which remains of sin is not imputed. And that the subject may be rendered still clearer, we would have the reader remember, that there is a twofold grace of baptism; for, on the one hand, it procures us forgiveness of sins; and, on the other, the renewing of the inner life; the new birth—regeneration. The forgiveness, we assert, is perfect: but the new-birth is only begun, and must be continued through the whole of our lives; sin therefore still remains actually in us, and is not at once, or in a single day, rooted out; but because the condemnation ceases, sin is not imputed.

“Nothing is more intelligible than this doctrine. Let us now see why the council so loads it with anathemas. ‘God,’ say these worthies, ‘has nothing to hate in the regenerate.’ If I concede this, will it follow therefrom that sin is not hateful? or rather, that God does not hate that which He may rightfully hate, because He forgives it? The testimony of the apostle which they adduce is altogether in our favor; namely, that ‘there is no condemnation for them who are in Christ Jesus;’ for he does not hereby acquit believers of guilt, as if they were altogether pure, or loosed from all sin; but he frees them from the condemnation, because they who sigh, oppressed with the load of guilt, are supported by the consolation of which he thus speaks, and speaks still more largely afterwards.

“The fathers add to what is above quoted, that nothing would remain, were the case as stated, to keep the baptized from heaven. This I allow; not as if no further obstacle remained for them to encounter, but because, clothed with the righteousness of Christ, nothing can injure them any more. These horned fathers however give a very different account of the matter; namely, that they have put off the old man, and put on the new man, which is created after God, and is wholly pure and righteous. Who sees not the deceit involved in this? He who is in the midst of his work cannot be said to have completed it. Is it therefore not a manifest contradiction to say, that they are pure and righteous who are still engaged in putting off the old man?

“But let us sift their decree still further. They deny that the evil desires, or that fuel of sin, which they must recognize even in the regenerate, can injure those who do not yield, when exposed to the conflict. It may not harm them indeed, and for this reason, that God’s strength is made perfect in our weak-

ness. But if they regard these wicked desires as mere provocatives to the practice of virtue, Paul had no right to complain that he was so especially weak and wretched.\* Still I am quite unable to combat them with these words of human weakness; the idea of wicked desires, of vice and sin, being to them so utterly without meaning. If the corruption in the will be not sin, man is not a living creature. If vice be without guilt before God, the sun is no longer bright. What shall I say of sin? They declare, laughably enough, that Paul was driven to an improper use of this word, because the lust spoken of is the cause of sin, and is derived from the punishment of our father Adam. But the connection of the apostle's discourse is manifestly opposed to this notion. Having distinctly spoken of sin, he says soon after, 'I find that when I would do good, evil is present with me, through the law.' Does this also appear to them as said figuratively? If the argument concerned the word only, they would have as little right to speak thus, as they who deny that children come into the world with actual sin, both parties giving the same explanation of the word 'sin.' The only difference between them is, that the latter speak in such general terms of original sin, that it can scarcely be called sin. But these worthy fathers wish us to believe, that the same thing, after baptism, is no longer that which it is, although it continues to be the same thing. But if they really wish to make their cause better, they must first show that the nature of things can be so altered, that that which is the same may become unlike itself. If we treat however of the thing itself, rather than of the word, there will soon be an end of all strife. No one can deny, without folly, that resistance to God's law is actually sin. Now that lust, even in the regenerate, is such a rebellion against the divine law, appears from the apostle himself. It follows therefrom, that according to its proper nature it is sin, though not imputed, and though the condemnation is taken away through the grace of Christ. If it be the proper rule of Christian life, to love God with all the heart, with all the mind, and with all the strength, surely the heart cannot be otherwise inclined without a departure from righteousness. But Paul complained that the righteousness which he would, he could not, fulfil. The law demands of us a perfect love, and this we have not. We ought to run, and we only limp. But these worthy fathers find nothing in all this which deserves to be called sin."

\* Rom. vii. 24.

In the following, that is, the sixth session, the council determined the catholic doctrine of justification, representing on the one side the merits of Christ, and on the other the good works of men, as necessary to salvation. The service which Calvin rendered in his opposition consists in this, that by his usual firmness and appeal to principles, he exposed their error so completely, that the Tridentines had not a foot to stand upon. According to his view, all must be taken from man, and all given to God. In the first place, he repeats with Augustine, that man has lost his own proper free-will, and is in bondage to sin. At the same time he protests against the violent statement, that the treachery of Judas, as well as the calling of Paul, must be ascribed to God alone. God however works by the wicked, and permits the occurrence of evil. Thus, for example, it was his counsel that Christ should die. Man cannot do good works before regeneration. Justification comes from faith alone, without external free-will, but depends upon faith and will together, God disposing the will. The faith which justifies us effects the new birth, and is united with love. In opposition to the anathema of the Tridentine fathers, he declares justification to be a firm trust, a belief, that God has forgiven our sins for the sake of Jesus Christ. "If any one asserts," they say, "that a man is freed from his sins, and justified, because he confidently believes that he is justified, and that no one can be justified who does not so believe; and that absolution and justification are perfected through faith,—let him be accursed." For according to the principle here condemned, the Christian would no longer stand in need of the salvation-giving church.

Calvin combined with justification, the certainty of salvation, and the perseverance of the elect. The synod was also obliged, according to catholic principles, to protest against this doctrine of election. Thus, the elect and the justified may fail all their lives through.

Here follow Calvin's definition and account of works, in contradistinction to the Roman view of the subject:—"Works increase not the power of justification, though God may reward them. No works are altogether pure, but are always combined with sin. If God rewards us with eternal life, this is the result of grace. All sin comes from the want of a true and sincere faith. Faith proves itself by good works; contrary, that is, to the popish notion, that it may remain, though grace be lost through sin; and that a dead faith is notwithstanding faith."

Calvin further asserted, in opposition to the papists, that a man may turn, after any sin committed, by true repentance, to God. But the Tridentines required the sacrament of penitence, or confession ; which it was not possible for Peter, or a thousand others to have, who died before the institution of this sacrament, which they call the door of salvation, and of which their own historians testify that it was established only about 400 years ago.

In the thirtieth canon the Tridentines say, that, he is accursed who believes that the guilt or sentence of eternal death is already wholly remitted through justification, and will accordingly be attended with no evil either here or in purgatory. To this Calvin replies :—"The holy Scriptures teach us that if God takes away the guilt, the punishment also is remitted. The Tridentines would appease God by our temporal sufferings. This is easy for them, recognizing as they do scarcely any other sin but murder. Many offences are with them but slight errors, and some of the worst lusts are so represented as to seem virtues which deserve praise. Of an evil conscience they think nothing. But we, who after a long trial feel ourselves shamed, and bowed to the dust, can only exclaim with David, 'Lord, who can tell how oft he offendeth ? forgive me my secret sins.' We cannot so easily make distinctions. It is not, we acknowledge, to be denied, that God often chastens us, even after He has forgiven our sin ; but this is only to improve us, and not to exercise his wrath. It is therefore a heathenish fancy to suppose, that a man by punishments may satisfy the judgments of God. There is not a word about purgatory in the whole of Scripture ; and Augustine\* says, that when a thing is so difficult in itself to comprehend, and is not alluded to in the holy Scriptures, it is calculated to create perplexity if men meddle with the subject. That purgatory cannot be admitted without nullifying the entire truth of the Bible, appears from this, that it is founded on the notion of penance. Our works are not our merit ; they are themselves given us by grace. We can only call them ours, as we say, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' Merit is a free gift."†

The last article is humorous. The Tridentines anathematize every one who may believe that their decrees are, in the slightest degree, opposed to the honor of God, and the merits of

\* Ep. 157, ad Optatum.

† See Canon xxxii.



Jesus Christ :—"An admirable provision ! to forbid the seeing of that which every one sees ! They have themselves almost set at naught the honor of God and Christ, and then thunder forth their anathemas against those who dare to think that they have in anywise injured it. This is just as if some one had killed a man in a public place and in the presence of the multitude, and then should prohibit people from saying that the murder, which every one had seen, had really been committed. It is thus these tricksters deceive themselves. They foolishly hope to inspire others with such fear by their anathemas, that they may not dare to recognize the impiety of which they are themselves so conscious."

In the seventh session, the subject of the sacrament, and of the government of the church, was discussed. Calvin has not treated of the canons which were passed after the long and frequent interruptions in the progress of the council. He only expressed his wish that the present work should be read in connection with that 'On the Necessity of Reforming the Church.' The council lost much of its internal strength, when, the imperial representatives remaining behind at Trent, and the papal party removing to Bologna, both parties assailed each other with the most hostile spirit. It was not till the year 1551 that the council could be re-opened at Trent. Only some few isolated remarks on its proceedings are found in Calvin's later works ; as for example, in the preface to his Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, addressed to the king of Denmark. Having spoken of the true and false church, he says, "Without looking further for examples, we see in our own times, now the Tridentine, and now the Bolognese fathers, after having bitterly contended against each other, foaming forth, on both sides, their windy canons. There they sit ; I know not how many bishops and abbots, perhaps a hundred horned beasts : and if the choicest flower of that people should shine forth, it would be nothing else but a wicked conspiracy against God. But now, after the pope has gathered together all the filth and dregs that he could into a mass, a representative church at once starts up there, and they are not ashamed to call that a holy, universal, legitimate synod, which deserves to be regarded in no other light than that of a vain and ridiculous mask. Let us, however, to whom the promise is given, that the antichrist who sits in the temple of God shall be destroyed by the breath of his mouth, never

cease to oppose by the divine Word that infamous and whorish presumption which so daringly insults it; that all men may clearly understand what a difference there is between the chaste bride of Christ and the shameless harlot of Belial: between the temple of God and the brothel of Satan; between the spiritual dwelling of the pious and a sty for swine; in a word, between the true church and the Romish court. Neither Euclid nor Archimedes could give a clearer proof than that which we afford, when we compare the church described by Luke with the synagogue of the pope."

Thus the schism in the community of Christ was rendered permanent. After the discussion at Ratisbone, the vain experiment of Contarini, and the efforts made by Leibnitz a century and a half later, in his correspondence with Bossuet, no further step could be taken to restore the unity of the church. But at length it is beginning to be seen, that the schism has a deeper foundation than is ordinarily supposed; that it arises from the two distinct tendencies of the human spirit, each however combined with sin; and that no hope of reunion can ever be entertained, unless, on the side of the catholics, the Romish principle of tyrannical rule, and on that of the protestants, the fanaticism of a critical understanding, be tamed by the influence of a living faith. It is not improbable that the catholic church, reforming itself, may at last compel Rome to give up the egotistical dogma of the power of the church, with which all its anti-christian errors and prejudices are so closely combined. Thus also protestants, after a long experience, may ultimately renounce that critical principle of individual inquiry with which their systematic unbelief, which has set up antichristianity on our path, is so entirely identified. In this manner both parties may subject themselves to the temporal and spiritual rule of the ecclesiastical synods proposed by Calvin. The catholics will learn to venerate the holy Scriptures in their whole extent; the protestants tradition. The evangelical principle of justification will conquer through Christ, and the tyranny of the church will fall with the papal rule. On the other hand, the doctrine of election, carried too far by human reason, and disturbing the consciousness of freedom in man; and, in the mystery of the Lord's Supper, the dogma, properly intelligible neither to the one party nor the other, will give way, and the belief in the real presence of the glorified Christ will at length convert be-

lievers into spiritual members of his body. All, indeed, will sooner or later be obliged to confess the force of Calvin's words, in which he acknowledged that this mystery so surpassed, by its sublimity, the power of his comprehension, that he could only admire with awe what his soul could not explain.

## APPENDIX.

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IN the "*Christianæ Fidei a Huldrycho Zwinglio prædicatæ brevis et clara Expositio, ab ipso Zwinglio paulo ante mortem ejus ad Regem Christianum scripta,*" &c. Tiguri 1536, the following passages occur. Calvin remarks, in a letter to Viret, that Zwingli probably modified, in some degree, the opinions here stated. In reference to the fact that in God alone can we place our trust, he says,—"*Si sacramentis fidendum est, jam sacramenta Deum esse oportet, ut non tantum eucharistiæ sacramentum, sed et baptis-mus, manuumque impositio Deus sit.*" "If we are to trust to the sacra-ments, the sacraments must be God; so that not only the sacrament of the eucharist, but baptism, and the imposition of hands, are God." Again: We do not reject the sacraments, but give them their proper place. "*Sac-ramenta veneramur ut signa et symbola rerum sacrarum, non quasi res ipsæ sint quarum signa sunt.*" They are signs and symbols, but not the things which they represent. So also the Lord's Supper is only a 'com-memoration of the death of Christ. "*Jam constat frivolum esse, quod sac-ramenta docemus peccata dimittere, bonaque largiri.*" On the presence of Christ in the sacrament it is said, "*In cœna Domini naturale ac substantiale istud corpus Christi, quo et hic passus est, et nunc in cœlis ad dexteram patris sedet, non naturaliter et per essentiam editur, sed spiritualiter tantum. Christi humanitas non est æterna, ergo neque infinita; si finita, jam non est ubique—mens reficitur hac fide, quam symbolis testaris.*" Thus the words of consecration must not be taken naturally, and in their proper sense, but symbolically, sacramentally, denominatively; in the way of metonymy. "*Hoc est corpus meum sacramentale, sive mysticum; i. e. ejus, quod vere adsumsi mortique objeci, symbolum sacramentale et vicarium.*" That is, "This is my sacramental or mystical body: the sacramental and vicarious symbol, namely, of that which I truly took and subjected to death."

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The following is the original of the Confession of Faith concerning the



Eucharist, presented by Farel, Calvin, and Viret, and which was subscribed by Bucer and Capito, 1537 :—

“ Vitam spiritualementem quam nobis Christus largitur, non in eo duntaxat sitam esse confitemur, quod spiritu suo nos vivificat, sed quod spiritus etiam sui virtute carnis suæ vivificæ nos facit participes, qua participatione in vitam æternam pascamur. Itaque cum de communione, quam cum Christo fideles habent, loquimur, non minus carni et sanguini ejus communicare ipsos intelligimus quam spiritui, ut ita totum Christum possideant. Si quidem cum aperte testetur scriptura, carnem Christi vere nobis esse cibum, et sanguinem ejus vere potum; ipsis vero nos educari oportere constat, si vitam in Christo quærimus. Jam nec exiguum quiddam aut vulgare docet apostolus, cum nos carnem de Christi carne et ossa ex ossibus ejus esse asserit, sed eximium nostræ cum ipsius corpore communionis mysterium ita designat, quod nullus verbis satis pro dignitate explicare queat. Cæterum istis nihil repugnat, quod Dominus noster in cælum sublatus, localem corporis sui præsentiam nobis abstulit, quæ hic minime exigitur. Nam utcumque nos in hac mortalitate peregrinantes in eodem loco cum ipso non includimur aut continemur, nullis tamen finibus limitata est ejus spiritus efficacia, quin vere copulare et in unum colligere possit quæ locorum spatiis sunt disjuncta. Ergo spiritum ejus vinculum esse nostræ cum ipso participationis agnoscimus, sed ita ut nos ille carnis et sanguinis domini substantia vere ad immortalitatem pascat et eorum participatione vivificet. Hanc autem carnis et sanguinis sui communionem Christus sub panis et vini symbolis in sacrosancta sua cæna offert et exhibet omnibus, qui eam rite celebrant juxta legitimum ejus institutum.

“ *Subscriptio Bucer, Capitonis et aliorum.*

“ Hanc sententiam optimorum fratrum et symmystarum nostrorum G. Farelli, Joh. Calvinique atque P. Vireti ut orthodoxam amplectimur, neque unquam sensi Christum Dominum in sacra cæna præsentem localiter aut ubique diffusum: verum et finitum habet corpus et in gloria manet cœlesti. In hac autem nihilo minus est per verbum suum atque symbola: hic sistit se nobis cum ipso jam in cœlestia per fidem sublevatis, ut panis quem frangimus et calix per quem Christum prædicamus sit nobis vere corporis et sanguinis ejus communicatio. Præterea ut errorem in Ecclesia non ferendum agnoscimus, nuda et inania Christum statuere in sacra sua cæna symbola, et non credere hic ipsum quoque corpus et ipsum sanguinem Domini percipi, hoc est ipsum Dominum verum Deum et hominem.

“ Martinus Bucerus sua manu scripsit.

“ Wolfgangus Capito subscripsit.”

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The Articles here referred to were drawn up in Calvin's own hand-writing, and were thus expressed in the original Latin :—

“ 1. Ex tribus conformitatis capitibus, quæ nobis sunt proposita, primum, de baptisteriis exigendis nos facile admissuros jam antehac testati sumus, modo in ceteris nihil ex ritu hactenus observato immutetur; nempe, ut baptismus ipse, quibus horis ecclesia convenire solet, administretur, et ejus doctrina, quo melius exaudiri queat, e suggestu recitetur. 2. In mutando pane paullo majori difficultate constringimur. Nuper enim perspeximus, quantum offensionis exoriturum erat, si qua tunc facta fuisset mutatio. Nos tamen daturos fidelissimam operam recipimus, ut panis azymi usus in ecclesiam nostram inducatur. Sed hoc vicissim cupimus a Bernatibus impetratum, ut fractionem panis nobiscum recipiant, ne posthac de hac quoque differentia nova quæstio nascatur. 3. In feriis plurima laboramus perplexitate, quemadmodum semper sumus professi, neque alia conditione concedere possumus istas quatuor institui, nisi ut tollatur nimium imperiosa earum indictio, ac liberum sit iis qui volent, post concionem ad opus se conferre. Non tamen fenestram audemus aperire tot turbis, quas emersuras jam prospicimus, si aliter fiat. 4. Hæc autem nobis optima et convenientissima censetur ratio recipiendæ conformitatis, si legati Bernatium palam testentur, ceremonias hactenus apud nos observatas sibi minime improbari, neque se quidpiam in illis novatum ideo cupere, quod scripturæ puritate alienum judicent: sed unam se concordiam et unitatem spectare, quæ rituum similitudine melius coalescere solet. Concio etiam a nobis habeatur de cerimoniarum libertate, deinde ad conformitatem populum adhortemur, propositis ejus rationibus. Demum liberum ecclesiæ judicium permittatur. Sic enim occurreret offendiculis, bonorum animi præparabuntur, qui nunc aliquantum sunt aversi, et res quo decet ordinè geretur. 5. Si de nobis restituendis agitur, istud inprimis cupimus curatum, ut ad diluendas calumnias, quibus oppressi sumus, admittamur. Barbaries enim et inhumanitas fuit non ferenda, quod indefensos damnarunt, cum nos ad causam dicendam pro curiæ foribus præsto essemus. Obnoxium siquidem futurum est nostrum ministerium impiorum maledictiæ, quamdiu jactare poterunt, per culpæ deprecationem fuisse restitutos. Jactabunt autem haud dubie, nisi datus fuerit purgationi locus. 6. Erit deinde studium adhibendum disciplinæ stabiliendæ. Alioqui mox collabetur, quicquid in præsens instauratum fuerit. Etsi autem plura optemus, quia tamen hoc tempore obtineri posse nulla spes est, quæ in primis necessaria sunt, constitui cupimus. 7. Primum est, ut urbs in certas parochias distribuatur. Quum enim, præterquam quod populosa est, collecta etiam est ex varia diversarum gentium multitudine, valde confusa semper erit ejus administratio, nisi propius pastorem suum plebs respiciat, et pastor vicissim plebem. Quod fiet instituta ista distinctione. 8. Deinde ut eo numero ministri assumantur, qui tantæ provinciæ sufficere queant. 9. Ut Germanus excommunicationis usus restituatur eo, quem præscripsimus, modo, nempe ut a Senatu eligantur ex singulis urbis regionibus probi et cordati viri, quibus in commune nobiscum ea cura incumbat. 10. Ut in ministrorum vocatione legitimus ordo serve-

tur: ne manuum impositio, quæ penes ministros esse debet, magistratus potentia tollatur e medio. Quod non semel nostri conati sunt. 11. Quum autem duo restant ceremoniarum capita, in quorum altero jam discrimen est, in altero futurum expectamus, rogandi sunt nobis et obtestandi Bernates, ut in iis sese nobis accommodent. 12. Prius est, ut frequentior cœnæ usus restituatur, si non secundum veteris ecclesiæ consuetudinem, at saltem singulis quibusque mensibus semel. 13. Alterum ut ad publicas orationes Psalmorum cantio adhibeatur. 14. Postremo, quum in lascivis et obscenis cantilenis ac choræis, quæ ad illarum numeros semper sunt compositæ, nostri Bernatium exempla prætexant, oratos volumus, ut e sua quoque ditione tales spurcicias eliminent, ne suo exemplo dent nostris occasionem rursus eas expetendi. M. Junio 1538."

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Dr. Henry has directed especial attention to Calvin's own translation of the Institutes into French. The passages which refer to the doctrine of Providence, as spoken of in the present chapter, afford an interesting specimen of his French style:—

Liv. I. Chap. XVI. p. 4. "Quant est des choses advenir, Salomon accorde facilement avec la providence de Dieu les consultations, qu'on en prend. Car comme il se moque de l'outrecuidance de ceux qui entreprennent hardiment sans Dieu, tout ce qui leur vient en fantaisie, comme s'ils n'estoyent point regis de sa main : aussi en autre lieu il parle ainsi: Le cœur de l'homme doit penser à sa voye : et le Seigneur gouvernera ses pas. En quoy il signifie que le decret eternal de Dieu ne nous empesche point que nous ne prouvoyons à nous sous sa bonne volonté et mettions ordre à nos affaires. La raison est manifeste : car celuy qui a limité nostre vie, nous a aussi commis la sollicitude d'icelle : et nous a donné les moyens pour la conserver : et nous a fait prévoir des perils, à ce qu'ils ne nous peussent surprendre, nous donnant les remedes au contraire, pour y obvier. Maintenant il appert quel est nostre devoir. Si le Seigneur nous a baillé nostre vie en garde, que nous la conservions : s'il nous donna les moyens de ce faire, que nous en usions : s'il nous monstre les dangers, que nous ne nous y jettions point follement et sans propos : s'il nous offre les remedes, que nous ne les mesprisions point. Mais nul peril ne peut nuire, dira quelqu'un, s'il n'est ordonné qu'il nous nuise. Et si ainsi est, on ne peut venir à l'encontre par aucun remede. Mais au contraire, que sera ce si les dangers ne sont pas invincibles, d'autant que le Seigneur nous a assigné les remedes pour les surmonter ? Regarde quelle convenance il y a entre ton argument et l'ordre de la providence divine. Tu inferes qu'il ne faut donner garde des dangers pour ce que nous en pourrions eschapper sans nous en garder, moyennent qu'ils ne soyent pas invincibles. Le Seigneur au contraire te commande de t'en garder pour ce qu'il veut que tu en eschappes. Ces enragez ne considerent point ce que l'on voit à l'œil, que

l'industrie de consulter et se garder, a esté inspirée de Dieu aux hommes, par laquelle ils servissent à la providence, en conservant leur vie, comme au eontraire par nonchalance et mespris ils acquierent les miseres qu'il veut leur imposer. Car dont est-ce qu'il advient qu'un homme prudent en mettant ordre à ses affaires destourne le mal qui luy estoit prochain, et un fol par sa temerité perit ? Qu'est-ce autre chose, si non que folie et prudence sont instrumens de la dispensation de Dieu, en une partie et en l'autre ?—— Nous ne devons point contempler la providence de Dieu nue, mais avec les moyens que Dieu lui a conjoincts, comme s'il la revestoit pour nous apparoir en son estat.

P. 6. "Pourtant le cœur de l'homme chrestien veu qu'il a cela tout resolu, qu'il advient rien à l'adventure, mais que toutes choses se font par la providence de Dieu, regardera tousjours à luy, comme à la principale cause de tout ce qui se fait : mais cependant il ne laissera point de contempler les causes inférieures en leur degré. Davantage, il ne doutera pas que la providence de Dieu veille pour sa conservation : et qu'elle ne permettra rien advenir, qui ne soit pour son bien et salut.——Quant est des hommes, soit qu'ils soyent bons ou mauvais, ils recognoistront que leurs conseils, volonteiz et forces, puissances et entreprinses sont sous la main de Dieu : tellement qu'il est en luy de les fleschir où bon luy semble, et les reprimer toutes fois et quantes que bon lui semble."





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